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The Millennium Journal 2000

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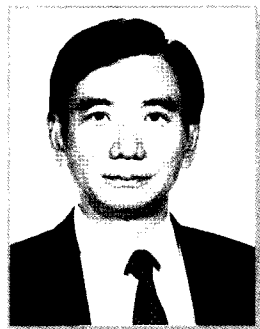
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Foreword

by
Prof. W.S. Leung
College Master

This is the fifth journal of the College in the past ten years, following the publication of the Journal of the 30th Anniversary of the College two years ago. The Millennium Journal is the second journal of its kind. It is similar in nature to its predecessor entitled, "The Evenings of the Insights" published in 1996, and it contains the collected scripts of some of the Guest Night speeches and most of the College Seminar abstracts. There are also several articles by residents and the scripts of three special lectures organised by the College. The photographs of many of the speakers are also included in the journal.



Over the last decade, the College has established itself as a centre for academic and cultural exchanges in the University of Hong Kong. Looking ahead to the first few years of the new millennium, the intellectual functions in the College will continue and emphasis will be placed on their quality. The intellectual exchange activities in the College which in the past have been focused between East and West, will increasingly be directed to between North and South to strike an appropriate balance. There is a program for modernising the premises of the College on a continuous basis. At present, the limited number of bedrooms for visitors has prevented the College from developing into a conference venue. Subject to the availability of a suitable site, the College plans to expand its accommodation capacity and to install the necessary facilities to assist the University to hold more international conferences, hopefully in the not-so-distant future. In the meantime, there is also a program to increase the provision of hi-tech equipment in the College, including computers and other communications facilities for use by the resident visitors.

Many of the local research students resident in the College are Swire Scholars whose residence is largely paid for by their Scholarships from John Swire and Sons Ltd. They have contributed quite a number of articles in this journal. Last year, a Swire Scholars' Association, which embodies all the current and past recipients of Swire Scholarships in Hong Kong, was formed. I congratulate the founding members of the Association upon a job well done, and I wish the Association every success in the years that lie ahead in the new millennium. In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the journal editor, Dr. Eric So, and to all the authors who have made contributions to the journal. To all our readers, let me say, "I wish you all the very best in the new millennium. Your advice on the College will always be welcome and appreciated."

Editorial

by

Dr. Eric C.W. So

Editor

Thirty years ago, the Robert Black College of the University of Hong Kong was founded with the aim of providing a place where visiting scholars from all corners of the world can meet and discuss with our local faculty members and research students. To achieve this goal, the College has been making every effort to provide a comfortable accommodation for the visitors and to organize various academic and cultural functions including Guest Nights and Seminar Nights to promote the exchanges. Over the years, the College has already earned a reputation as a centre of the University for facilitating academic and cultural exchanges between East and West, and between town and gown.



As a senior tutor in the College, it is part of my duties and my great honour to participate and help to organize both the Guest Nights and College Seminars. I am so impressed by the original idea of setting up these regular culture-exchange activities that are unique in the University. Each Guest Night will have a guest speaker giving a seminar on a topic of his choice. The Guest Nights are always well attended and the speeches always inspiring. Over the years, Guest Night speakers included numerous distinguished academic scholars, personalities in the local community and senior officials of the Hong Kong Government, including a former Governor of Hong Kong. College Seminars are usually given by graduate students in the College to share their research experiences with other graduate students.

It is my great pleasure as the editor to compile the written contributions on the speeches of Guest Nights and Special Lectures as well as the abstracts of the College Seminars in the past five years for The Millennium Journal. This journal differs from its predecessor "The Evenings of the Insights" in having a new section that comprises articles from residents of the College. To publish this journal successfully, a lot of people have contributed help in a variety of ways. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their significant inputs. I am heavily indebted to all the authors who contribute their articles that are the essential elements of the journal. Sincere thanks are given to the Swire Scholars in the College and Miss Erica Tse for their proof reading of the drafts, and to the staff in the College office for their clerical assistance. Last but not the least, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Master, Professor W.S. Leung, who has made a lot of useful suggestions on the format of the journal. Publishing this journal at the beginning of the year 2000 is one of my commitments to the College before I leave the University to further my research studies at Stanford University. This journal will always remind me of the unique and remarkable position of the College in Hong Kong. I wish the College every success in the future.

*Scripts of
Guest Night Speeches
1995-1999*

Racing - A Way of Life in Hong Kong its past, present & future

by

Mr. Paulus S. Lee

Director of Finance & Central Services

The Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club

Professor Leung, ladies and gentlemen:

It is indeed my great pleasure to attend your Guest Night and to meet with so many distinguished professors and scholars from Hong Kong and overseas. I am sure all of you, even if you have been here for only a short time, will know of the Jockey Club. You may even have had the opportunity to try your luck at one of our race meetings. If you have, you will have witnessed one of the greatest sporting spectacles of Hong Kong, a spectacle that has become symbolic of Hong Kong's way of life. Yet, there is another side to the coin. The Club runs racing and betting, but it also devotes a substantial part of its effort and all of its surplus income to the community, and community and charitable projects. Last year alone, this amounted to HK\$1.2 billion or US\$155 million. The Club then plays a unique and some would say paradoxical role. On the one hand it is a business generating income from activities that some would view as a social ill. On the other hand, it is a public body, spending that money for the social good. How this situation came about and the scope of the Club's community efforts is something I would like to explore this evening. I will also bring you up to date with the most recent developments, namely the growth of the Club internationally and its involvement with racing across the border in China.

The story of the Club is, of course, very much that of Hong Kong itself, so it is appropriate that I start back in the 1840s at the very foundation of the colony. It seems that no sooner had the first colonists run up the Union Jack than they were organising horse racing. Happy Valley was chosen because it was flat but too swampy and malarial for settlement. Early racing was very much an ad hoc affair with races usually held only once a year. The course too remained pretty undeveloped as this shot from the late 19th century shows. 1884 saw the foundation of the Hong Kong Jockey Club by a group of private businessmen who saw the need for more substantial organisation of racing. Facilities were gradually improved as this picture from 1895 shows. You can see that matshed stands have been erected. Notice also the nullah running along the side of the course. In times of heavy rain this frequently flooded out the stands. Happily the quality of both our stands and drainage have improved since then!

This state of affairs, a club focused on regulating racing and progressively upgrading facilities, prevailed basically until the 1950s. However it was at this time that developments in Hong Kong and in the Club led to a substantial change of direction. The Club had, by now, become one of the most prominent institutions in the territory with a close relationship with government, and a strong place in the community. Its finances had shown comparable growth.

This slide of Happy Valley in the 50s shows this quite clearly. Gone are the matsheds and in their place are substantial structures dominating the buildings around.

Club growth was paralleled by growth and change in Hong Kong. This was the beginning of Hong Kong's population explosion and of industrialisation bringing with them the need for housing, health care and education. It was against this background that the Club made its first offer of assistance to the government in 1952 when it offered to turn over all surplus funds to charitable and community undertakings. The Club was of course already providing the government with substantial income through betting duty and other taxes. It still does. But the Club also appreciated that there was still a strong community need and that it had the resources to help meet that need. The formation of a separate entity, now called the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust soon followed. Having looked at how the Club's community policy developed let me give you a brief overview of some of its major community activities over the past years. They are achievements which I feel we can all take some pride in. Here I should say that we see our role as providing financial support to existing charitable organisations or community projects. We do not involve ourselves directly in the running of these organisations.

To give you some idea of the figures, over the past ten years almost HK\$9 billion or US\$1.2 billion has been allocated. The money has gone to Care and Rehabilitation programmes for the disabled, to Community Services, Medical and Health Programmes, Youth Programmes, Arts and Culture and of course Education and Training. This slide shows a view of HKUST, a major undertaking funded and project managed by the Club and completed in 1992. Indeed we have been pleased to support many of Hong Kong University's projects over the years. We have also been involved in funding and in some cases managing the building of many of Hong Kong's leisure facilities. These have included Ocean Park, Hong Kong Park, Hong Kong Sports Institute, Academy for Performing Arts and Hong Kong Stadium. Our latest project is the development of a public golf course at Kau Sai Chau in the New Territories.

Of course, I must hasten to remind you that the backdrop to all this is the continued role of horse racing in Hong Kong. Quite simply it is Hong Kong's premiere sport. And for those of you who like hard facts here are a few to chew on! At each race meeting:

- an average of 50,000 spectators crowd our two racecourses in Happy Valley and Shatin,

- over 5 million tickets are sold, the vast majority at our 125 betting centres spread throughout the territory, and

- 480,000 phone calls are received at our 2 telephone betting centres from 600,000 registered account holders.

In fact we estimate that no less than 1.2 million people participate regularly in horse racing; that is over a quarter of Hong Kong's population aged 18 years and above.

What this adds up to is a Jockey Club that continues to be a major source of entertainment and an outlet for the energies of a very large proportion of Hong Kong's population. It is also a Jockey Club that continues to contribute a significant amount to the government revenue. Last year, the Club paid HK\$10 billion or US\$1.3 billion in betting duty and taxes to the government; that is almost 10% of the total government taxation. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions about the implications for public spending if this source of revenue is lost. What I have been trying to illustrate up to now is how the growth of the Club has paralleled that of Hong Kong itself. Just as Hong Kong grew from very uncertain beginnings in the 1840s to its current wealth and status, so the Club has transformed itself from a private racing Club to a professional business and socially responsible public body. Hong Kong's most recent manifestation is as an international business centre, looking outward to the financial world of Europe and North America and to the emerging markets of Asia and especially China. The Club too has expanded itself internationally and in China and it is to these two areas that I would like to turn.

Mention of international business usually conjures up images of executives jetting between global business offices. Well in our business the jetting is done by horses! I am of course referring to the growing practice of running international races with horses flown in from overseas. It is an area where the Jockey Club is a leading player. It may seem unusual to highlight this given that so many other sports around the world have been conducted at an international level for years. But, although horse racing is a global sporting industry, there have been comparatively few international racing events. The main reason for this has been the practical problems associated with transporting real international racing circuit with all the glamour and media attention that such events generate. To date there has been no horse racing equivalent of World Tennis or the Grand Prix auto racing circuit.

However, things are changing and the Club has been at the forefront of such change. For many years, we have attracted top foreign jockeys to Hong Kong such as Gary Stevens from the US. Shown here are : Michael Kinane from Ireland, Lester Piggott from the UK, Yukio Okabe from Japan and Gerald Mosses from France. Since 1988 we have also hosted three international races a year attracting up to 30 horses, that is more than any other international race. These are, moreover, world class horses. This year, the field will include top horses from the English Derby and the French Prix de l'arc de Triomphe. Indeed I think it would not be too much to say that our races now amount to the equivalent of the "World Cup". Our global reach has also been enhanced through the satellite telecasting of Hong Kong races. As this slide shows, Hong Kong races hosted by Club presenters are now beamed live to spectators in 23 cities in 9 countries. Our own punters can also enjoy live telecasts of such famous races as the English Grand National and the Melbourne Cup.

Of course with 1997 not far away, Hong Kong is entering another period of change. Quite what the impact of the transfer of sovereignty will be may still be a cause of debate for some. As far as the Club is concerned I have no doubt that we will still be in business and horses will still be thundering around Happy

Valley and Shatin. Certainly this would be the wish of all Hong Kong people and to the continued advantage of the government. It is also something we are firmly committed to. Testament to this is the major re-development work at Happy Valley. Much of the work shown in this artist's impression has already been finished. When finally completed next month, we will have an international track that will take us well into the next century. In fact the Club has a role to play not just in Hong Kong but in China itself where the racing industry is undergoing a revival. For horse racing has almost as long a history in China as in Hong Kong. Before 1939, there were no less than 19 racecourses many attracting large crowds. Now several racecourses have opened again, such as this one in Guangzhou and this in Beijing. To date, 19 racecourses are either operating or being planned in China.

There are of course problems not the least of which is the fact that the Chinese government does not allow betting at this time. However for the moment the authorities seem satisfied with the situation and are keen to develop racing further. Indeed, as in Hong Kong, it is recognised that horse racing can provide not only public entertainment but also a valuable source of revenue. To give you some idea of the nature and scope of these developments, I would like to show you a short video shot at the Guangzhou racetrack. I think you will agree that this is a very sophisticated operation both in terms of the technology and the scale of public facilities. Of course most other tracks in China have yet to reach this standard but it does show the level of commitment to racing.

All of these developments have been followed closely by the Club and indeed we have been keen to help the Chinese authorities. For obvious reasons however, our efforts have been focused on improving the riding and racing aspects rather than betting systems. Here we have placed particular emphasis on helping China to build up its stock of thoroughbreds to replace the Mongolian ponies that is currently racing. We recently donated several ex-racehorses to Inner Mongolia and Beijing. More significantly we have entered into a joint venture with the Ministry of Agriculture to set up an authority for the control and registration of all thoroughbred breeding and all imported thoroughbreds in China. We anticipate that in the years to come this will help China to develop an international standard racing industry. Finally, looking ahead, the Club will also help to run the equestrian events at the Chinese national games in 1997. So, all these developments in China give us every confidence that racing has a very bright future in China, and that we will be able to contribute something towards that future.

Well, this has been the very briefest of introductions to the Club but I hope that it has given you a clearer picture of our activities and of the opportunities ahead. Racing is alive and kicking if developments in China are anything to go by. All I will do in closing, is to urge you to visit Happy Valley when the new track opens on 25th November. It promises to be a very special occasion.

Hong Kong's Port Development

by

Mr. Edward W. Brand

Director of Civil Engineering Department

Hong Kong Government

The importance of the port to Hong Kong's economy cannot be over-estimated, serving as it does as the main port for the whole of southern China. The spectacular economic growth of China has led to Hong Kong's being the world's busiest container port for some years. The number of containers handled in the Territory has shown an average annual growth over the past ten years of about 15%, and the Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs) handled in 1995 rose to about 11.1 million, an increase of 1.8 million over 1994. This compares with a figure of 10.4 million for Singapore (the second busiest) and 4.9 million for Kaohsiung (the third busiest). Shanghai, which is China's busiest port, handled only 1.15 million TEUs in 1995, which is less than Hong Kong's annual increase. If the container traffic in Hong Kong continues to increase at about 1.8 million TEUs each year, then our port will need to be capable of handling about 20 million TEUs by the year 2000.

At the present time, all container handling in Hong Kong is undertaken at the existing eight container terminals at Kwai Chung, which handled about 7.8 million TEUs in 1995, while 4.3 million TEUs were handled mid-stream in the western harbour. It is remarkable that the mid-stream quantity alone would place Hong Kong as the fifth busiest port in the world.

The much-discussed Container Terminal No. 9 (CT9) will be the last one to be built at Kwai Chung, because further expansion in that area is not possible. The Port & Airport Strategy (PADS) Study, undertaken by the Government during 1988 and 1989, showed that north Lantau was the most suitable place for the Territory's future major port development. In order that the new port could be readily connected to the new expressway to be built for the new airport at Chek Lap Kok, it was decided that the port would best be located in the vicinity of Penny's Bay on reclamation that would jut southeast into the western harbour.

The PADS outline concept for the Lantau Port was transformed into a development plan during the Lantau Port & Western Harbour (LAPH) Studies undertaken by the Civil Engineering Department from 1991 to 1993. These studies examined the alternative configurations for the Lantau Port in terms of the major constraints of (1) port and harbour operation, (2) marine risk and navigation, (3) transportation infrastructure for the port, (4) on-shore planning, and (5) environmental constraints. For this purpose, five basic feasible configurations were examined, namely:

- (a) a peninsula with berthing facilities on both sides ('peninsula' layout),
- (b) a basin containing berthing facilities, with marine access from the east ('basin east' layout),

- (c) a basin containing berthing facilities, with marine access from the west ('basin west' layout),
- (d) three separate 'islands' of container terminals joined to the west by bridges or causeways, so that marine access was from the east ('islands east' layout), and
- (e) three separate 'islands' of container terminals joined to the east by bridges or causeways, so that marine access was from the west ('islands west' layout).

The advantages and disadvantages of these five basic layouts were fully examined before it was decided that the 'islands west' configuration best fulfilled the requirements of the new Lantau Port without suffering from any unacceptable constraint. This layout (as later modified - see below) is shown in Figure 1. An important feature of this physical plan is that it will not be constrained by the marine traffic congestion that would otherwise occur if the entrance to the port was from the east. Accordingly, it was proposed that a new Western Shipping Channel would be dredged to serve the new port once CT12 was built.

The preliminary design, undertaken on the basis of the Lantau Port layout determined from the LAPH Studies, indicated that significant modifications were necessary to the layout on environmental grounds. Extensive state-of-the-art computer modelling of the noise impact from the port operations on the people living in Discovery Bay and Peng Chau Island showed that Hong Kong's planning standards would be exceeded unless fairly stringent measures were incorporated into the final design of each terminal. These standards dictate that the rural nature of north Lantau must be preserved as far as possible, and they therefore specify that the day-time and night-time sound levels at sensitive receivers must not exceed 55 and 45 dB respectively. As a result, the following two major design changes were made to the port layout as shown in Figure 1:

- (a) noise barriers about 25m high were added along the western boundary of each of CT10 & CT11, and
- (b) it was decided that CT12 would not be built north of the temporary breakwater as originally envisaged, but would be constructed to the south of the breakwater, and would be shielded by a noise barrier along the entire length of its northern and western boundaries.

Although the maximum provision has been made for the noise barriers in the finalized terminal layout, it is possible that the exact configuration will be modified after the first two terminals (CT10 & CT11) are in operation, at which time monitoring of the noise levels at Discovery Bay and Peng Chau might show that the water space north of the relocated CT12 (shown dotted in Figure 1) can be used to provide the six berths originally envisaged in that location. In particular, it is thought that continuing improvements in the noise outputs of port handling equipment might well make this possible.

As part of the LAPH Studies, the Government commissioned a special consultancy to examine future institutional arrangements for the port, and this concluded that container terminals should continue to be financed, built and operated by the private sector, with Government undertaking the planning and preliminary designs, and providing the infrastructure, in the usual way. However, because agreement with China on the construction of CT9 was delayed, it was decided that the detailed design of the first two terminals on Lantau (CT10 & CT11) should be carried out by Government so as to ensure that private developers could construct the terminals without delay once the go-ahead was given. The detailed design of CT10 and CT11, and of the necessary infrastructure for these terminals to operate, was therefore carried out by consultants working for the Civil Engineering Department from 1994 to 1995. It is hoped that the construction of these facilities will be able to commence during 1996.

The container terminals at Lantau Port will be very large. If the terminal space north of CT12 is able to be used, the fully developed port will comprise six terminals, each with four berths for the largest container vessels, with a total operating area of 720 hectares. Each terminal will be 80 hectares in area, plus a back-up area of 40 hectares. Each berth has a design capacity of 0.5 million TEUs per year, which means that the whole port has a design capacity of about 12 million TEUs per year, but it might well be physically possible for the completed port to handle appreciably more containers than this. By comparison, Kwai Chung will have a total of 23 berths when CT9 has been constructed, with a total terminal and backup area of only 204 hectares and a maximum handling capacity of about 10 million TEUs per year.

Only a very approximate estimate of the cost of the Lantau Port can be given at this stage, but it is likely to be something in excess of \$60 billion, of which about 60% (i.e. the cost of building and equipping the terminals themselves) will need to be privately financed. It is thought that Government's 40% (for back-up areas, infrastructure, etc.) will be largely covered by the land premiums received from the private developers of the terminals.

The large reclamations that will be necessary for the construction of the Lantau Port will require in excess of 200 million cubic metres of fill material and the dredging and disposal of very large quantities of marine mud. Although it was at one time envisaged that the majority of the fill would be obtained by developing a large land borrow area at Tsing Chau Tsai on north Lantau, this proposal has now been abandoned, mainly on environmental grounds. Instead, it is envisaged that marine sand from Chinese waters will be used for this purpose, and virtually all the mud will be disposed of in Chinese waters.

It should be emphasized that a large amount of hydraulic and environmental modelling has been carried out in determining the future shape of the Lantau Port, and great care has been taken to ensure that any adverse environmental effects will be mitigated. Once construction begins, exten-

sive monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that the environmental impacts are kept to acceptable limits.

In conclusion, it should be noted that all the documents relating to the planning and design of the Lantau Port are available in the Civil Engineering Department for public consultation.

12 March 1996

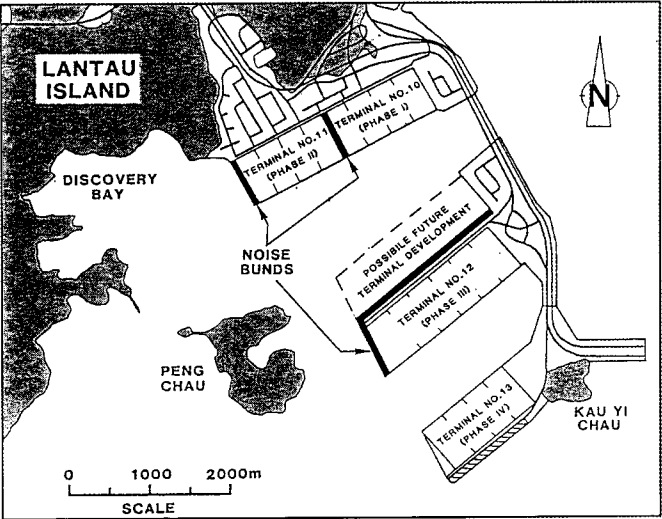


Figure 1. Layout Plan of the Lantau Port

Practising Law in Hong Kong

by

Ms. Anna Wu

Robert W.H. Wang & Co.

Hong Kong

The Sino-British Joint Declaration on the question of Hong Kong was initialed on 26th September 1984. In less than 433 days on 1st July 1997, Britain will turn Hong Kong over to China. Hong Kong will cease to be a British Crown colony and will become a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. It has been said that the weather in Britain has been the world's most powerful colonising impulse. That may be so, but the drug opium was certainly a factor in Britain's snatching up Chinese territory in the mid-19th century. The British wantonly peddled opium in China in order to balance off the large amounts of money they were spending for tea and other products to export home to Britain. China eventually tried to quell the flow of "foreign mud" on its streets and when it did British gunboats were brought in to ensure the free flow of people, their ideas, and economic resources.

Hong Kong was seized by Britain from a weakened Qing dynasty in three stages, beginning in 1841 when Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain in perpetuity under force of arms. This was followed by the Kowloon peninsula in 1860. In 1898, in order to strengthen its defences, Britain forced China to cede an additional 350 square miles of territory for a period of 99 years, beginning on 1 July 1898. Accounting for 92% of the colony's land area, the lease on the so-called New Territories is due to expire in less than 15 months. At first Hong Kong was not thought to be much of a jewel in the British crown. Lord Palmerston, in fact, scolded Captain Elliot - "you have obtained the Cession of Hong Kong, a barren island with hardly a house on it... Now it seems obvious that Hong Kong will not be a Mart of Trade." The barren little island did in fact become quite a mart of trade, so much so that as the expiration of the lease drew nearer, the stakes had become extremely high.

In the late 1970's, following Deng Xiaoping's rise to power after Chairman Mao had left to "see Marx", the British saw a window of opportunity. They perceived Deng as more pragmatic than his predecessor and thought they might strike a deal. So the British pushed China to discuss the future of Hong Kong. The Chinese had no real desire to consider the issue at the time. They were just then emerging from the chaos of the Cultural Revolution. But the British kept after them, hoping that by conceding sovereignty over Hong Kong to China, Britain might still be allowed to run Hong Kong. The British miscalculated. Forced to settle the matter, the landlord decided that, come 1997, Hong Kong would return to the embrace of its motherland. China unilaterally declared a policy of "one country, two systems". This meant that while China would reassert its sovereign claim to Hong Kong, it would not recreate Hong Kong in the mainland's socialist image.

In 1984 Britain and China announced their agreement in the form of the Joint Declaration, settling Hong Kong's future. It was essentially a restatement of policies China had unilaterally made public. Under the Joint Declaration, and consistent with the concept of "one country, two systems", both Britain and China agreed that Hong Kong's capitalist way of life would remain unchanged for at least 50 years after 1997. However, China would reassert its "exercise" of sovereignty over the so-called Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The Chinese, of course, boasted that the HKSAR would enjoy more freedom after 1997 than it had under colonial rule.

Within Hong Kong reactions were mixed. Some believed that change would be subtle — the Union Jack would be replaced by the Chinese flag and where the law refers to the Queen or the Crown the words Central People's Government or Special Administrative Region Government would be substituted. Apart from that, there would be no real change. There were also those who felt Hong Kong stood to gain economically from the opening up of China. But there were also the pessimists who began to vote defiance with their feet. Since 1984 more than half a million people have left Hong Kong for safer havens.

At the signing of the Joint Declaration, colonial Hong Kong was governed by a governor appointed by London, who, in turn, was assisted by an Executive Council and a Legislative Council, whose members he appointed.

The Joint Declaration states that the future legislature will be constituted by elections. The British interpreted this to mean that an all-appointed legislature had to be transformed into an all-elected legislature during the 13-year transition.

While the British wanted to leave with their honour intact with a self-governing territory, China was fearful of a British conspiracy and a run-away Hong Kong. Throughout the negotiation, Hong Kong was not allowed to have its own say. The Hong Kong public who feared a sell-out by the British also feared that without the British buffer Hong Kong would be too small and too fragile to stand up to China. By the end of 1985, China persuaded Britain to accept the concept of convergence. The Chinese argued that in order for there to be a smooth transition, Britain's action in Hong Kong had to be consistent with China's plans after 1997. Britain accepted the convergence policy thereby effectively giving China a veto power over matters involving Hong Kong.

Under this convergence theory, China and Britain agreed to a through train formula whereby the last legislature of the British-Hong Kong administration would be the first legislature of the post 1997 Hong Kong. This meant consensus politics and the British government lost the right to take the initiative. British policy following this was one of appeasement, of pretending that everything was fine so that they would be able to walk away from Hong Kong come 1997. The Tiananmen Square incident in June 1989 changed all that. All was not well. Under force of moral pressure, Britain gradually changed its policy from appeasement to confrontation. Marking the shift was Britain's decision finally to let Hong Kong have a bill of rights in 1990. Entered Governor Patten.

When he arrived in 1992, Patten deliberately changed Britain's style. Instead of secret diplomacy with China out of the public eye, Patten announced his proposals to the legislature and then went through a highly publicised period of consulting the Hong Kong public. Mr Patten's electoral reforms shocked the Chinese and China retaliated by declaring that the current legislature, elected into office in September 1995, would not survive 1997 and that a provisional legislature would be constituted instead.

The current legislature is the first ever fully elected body for Hong Kong but the composition of the provisional legislature is not entirely clear at this stage. We fear that it will be appointed and we fear that leading politicians will be barred from running in future elections. China has also declared its intention to dilute the impact of the Bill of Rights enacted in 1991 and to restore some of the laws which were recently amended to comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, extended to Hong Kong in 1976. These laws to be restored include the Emergency Regulations, which dates back to the 1920's. These provide wide discretionary powers to the Governor to detain and to deport persons, to seize printing presses and to create new offences.

Now that I've given you the lion's, as well as the dragon's, share of history, I'll try briefly to make some sense of what it all means in terms of the legal system in the run-up to 1997 and beyond. The British pushed China into negotiations because of what she saw as a legal problem, the expiration of the NT lease. China saw continuation of the lease as political baggage which she was not prepared to carry a second time and reunification was of paramount importance. The concept of "one country, two systems" is an imaginative one, but it is in essence a political solution with a weak juridical base. By definition, the two systems are incompatible. The survival of this concept is ultimately dependent on the political will of those ruling China. And the shape of the political will beyond 1997 is rather precarious, all the more so as Deng draws ever nearer to "seeing Mao".

Since 1984, we have had China versus Britain and political posturing clouding legal perspectives. The fear for the future is that this will become a conflict between "one country" and "two systems" and having the "two systems" clouded by the political perspectives of the "one country". While legal autonomy is specifically conferred on Hong Kong, this legal autonomy is at risk and under stress in several areas where the Hong Kong system interfaces with China. The Basic Law authorises the HKSAR to establish a Final Court of Appeal and the power of final adjudication of the HKSAR shall be vested in the Final Court of Appeal of the Region. However, the final interpretation right over the Basic Law rests with the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Will it be like placing a mouse on the jury of a cat's trial? When it comes to a serious dispute over interpretation of rights, it is difficult to see how that process would conclude in favour of Hong Kong.

Another example of where the legal system is under stress concerns the electoral provisions and the establishment of the legislative authority for Hong Kong. China says the 1994 electoral provisions proposed by Patten (subsequently

passed by the Legislative Council) violated the Joint Declaration, the Basic Law and the diplomatic understanding reached between Britain and China. The Basic Law says that the first legislature is to be constituted by elections. China is making preparations to set up a provisional legislature, the members of which may not be elected in any way. Should Hong Kong challenge that, assuming that such a challenge is even possible, the final decision will be left to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Here again, it is unlikely that a judgment would come down in favour of Hong Kong.

What's worse, the Basic Law empowers China to apply its laws to Hong Kong when, in its judgment, Hong Kong is threatened by turmoil. When the tanks were sent into Tiananmen Square, the Chinese government's justification at the time was that they were needed to quell turmoil, even though there were no riots and no acts of violence had broken out. What also alarms many people here, especially journalists, is the Basic Law's Article 23, which prohibits, among other things, treason, sedition, subversion and theft of state secrets. Several years ago, two mainland journalists were tried for leaking a speech of a party boss before it was delivered. One was sentenced to life in prison, the other for 6 years. But in a free society, we need information, information to check the government with and information for our businesses to work out their risks and profit margins.

At the heart of the problem is the fact that we are dealing with two very different systems. Hong Kong society is pluralistic and is governed by the rule of law. By the rule of law I mean an objective and rational set of rules that are consistently applied. It allows for impartial administration, it protects the individual, and it requires consistent government behaviour and predictability of results. It provides an orderly market for the businessmen. It also allows for co-existence between conflicting ideas. And we talk about the separation of power between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.

The future sovereign master for Hong Kong, however, has no separation of powers. The National People's Congress is the seat of political power, the source of law making, as well as the final arbiter through its right to interpret laws. Currently, there is only one hierarchy in China and that is a political one. Given this, the viability of the "one country, two systems" and the legal environment of Hong Kong depend ultimately on China's ability and willingness to separate the political issues from the legal issues. How secure will our legal system be? My way of answering the question is to read to you a passage from "Through the Looking Glass". (Lewis Carroll) "When I use a word", Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less."

"The question is", said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things".

"The question is", said Humpty Dumpty "who is to be Master — that's all"

Spectacles, Contact Lenses and the Laser

by

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Introduction

The Bible says that “The eye is the window of the soul” (Matthew 6:22). And in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act II, Scene 2) Shakespeare writes that “Young men’s love then lies, not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes”. The wonder of our sense of sight and the beauty of the eye as the visual organ have long been a source of fascination. Because we rely on our eyesight for so much of our sensory information, impaired visual function causes a corresponding decrease in the individual’s quality of life.

By far the commonest cause of subnormal vision is refractive error. It affects literally hundreds of millions worldwide and an estimated 70% of adults in Hong Kong. Unlike many disease processes, however, refractive error can be corrected easily and visual acuity restored in most cases. Until recently the only ways to correct refractive error were with spectacles or contact lenses. In the last twenty-five years or so surgical techniques have been used to change the optical system of the eye itself, so that spectacles or contact lenses are no longer needed. The latest concept in correction of refractive error is laser refractive surgery, or surgical reshaping of the eye surface. Technical advances over the last ten years have made this a reality, as permanent and stable correction of refractive error can now be realized in many cases. Is a future without the need for glasses or contact lenses possible? It may be, for many people.

Basic Optics

The eye acts like a camera, although it is perhaps more accurate to say that the camera acts like the eye. In both cases light is gathered from the environment, bent (or refracted) and transmitted by transparent elements. The transparent refractive elements of the eye are the cornea, or surface tissue, and the lens, which is located within the eye. Light is then focused on to a thin receptive element — film in the case of a camera and a tissue called the retina in the eye. The retina transforms the light into electrical impulses and sends them on to the brain in real time. Film, of course, must be removed from a camera for developing and printing.

There are two basic types of refractive error — hyperopia or farsightedness, and myopia, or nearsightedness. The myopic eye is too long, meaning that light is bent too much, focusing in front of rather than on the retina. This means that the optical system of the eye in myopia is actually too strong, and must be weakened in order to allow refractive correction. In practice this means flattening the cornea, since this is the most accessible

part of the eye. It is essentially impossible to shorten the adult eye — after adolescence there is usually no significant change in the size of the eye. Hyperopia is the opposite of myopia — the eye is too short and the incoming light is focused behind the retina. Since myopia is by far the most common refractive error encountered in Hong Kong, we will not discuss hyperopia further.

Spectacles and Contact Lenses

Spectacles have been used for several centuries. Unfortunately, they can induce a variety of distorting effects, collectively known as optical aberrations. In high degrees of refractive error, spectacles may be quite thick, forcing the users to wear heavy glasses. Spectacles are also an impediment in athletics, and many people prefer to avoid them in social situations. They may get lost or be broken. Another common affliction in Hong Kong is spectacles fogging up upon entering an air-conditioned room from the humid outside environment.

Contact lenses have been available since the early part of this century and have been an improvement over spectacles for many. Contact lenses are thin pieces of plastic that actually sit on the surface of the cornea, the clear part at the front of the eye. However, many people are contact lens intolerant because of dry eyes, ocular allergies or other surface conditions. In addition, contact lenses require continual maintenance in the form of cleaning, wetting, sterilizing as well as periodic replacement. If hygiene is inadequate there is a risk of serious infections of the cornea. Therefore ophthalmologists have searched for a more permanent, surgical correction of refractive error.

Refraction Surgery

Radial keratotomy (RK) was developed in the 1960s in Russia. It involves a series of mechanical incisions in the surface of the cornea, which has the effect of flattening the cornea. RK weakens the cornea and may lead to progressive changes in refraction over the long term. Besides this refractive instability there is the danger of trauma causing rupture of the eyeball. Despite these limitations, RK has been accepted by many ophthalmologists and their patients and it is a well-established and reliable technique for correcting low degrees of myopia. However, because it thins the cornea significantly and involves mechanical incisions, RK has inherent limitations.

The most recent development in refractive surgery has been the excimer laser, which is a high-powered laser that can remove tissue in a very precise manner while leaving no scar tissue. The very high power causes essentially no thermal damage as target tissue is vaporized and surrounding structures are untouched. This is essential in a transparent tissue such as the eye, where any scar tissue can lead to loss of vision. This technique holds great promise for correcting myopia in the adult Hong Kong population and is already being offered at a number of eye clinics here.

The basic procedure for excimer laser treatment is relatively simple. A complete eye examination is done, the refractive error is determined and the length of the eye is measured. In addition, a special “picture” of the corneal

surface, called topography, is performed. This records the corneal shape. The data is then entered into a computer that operates the excimer laser. Then a set of complex calculations is performed that determine the amount and location of corneal tissue to be removed. The patient is positioned under the laser apparatus and the laser energy is delivered under local anesthesia. Antibiotics are instilled and the eye is patched overnight.

Modern, high-technology approaches to problems such as refractive error will continue to be refined and developed. The most recent technique actually removes tissue within the cornea, leaving the surface intact and greatly accelerating the recovery period. It is too early to say whether this will be the preferred method, but it is likely that further refinements will enhance our ability to correct a wide range of refractive errors with greater precision, stability, comfort, and safety.

A Blueprint for China's Prosperity: The Basic Law of Hong Kong

by

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Real Estate & Construction Department
The University of Hong Kong

The title of today's talk is "A Blueprint for China's Prosperity: The Basic Law of Hong Kong". Before I discuss why I am making this statement, please allow me to very briefly provide you with the background of the Basic Law and how the cardinal features of the common law are entrenched in and supported by the Basic Law. Let me briefly recount the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration. The Joint Declaration makes it crystal clear that the Basic Law of Hong Kong shall be enacted in accordance with the Chinese constitution. Article 5 of the Chinese constitution provides that "no law or administrative rules and regulations shall contravene the constitution". The Basic Law was enacted by the National People's Congress under Article 31 of the Chinese constitution and it is very clear that this article and any law enacted, e.g. the Basic Law, are subject to the rest of the Chinese constitution.

The Chinese constitution expressly adheres to four cardinal principles:

1. The leadership of the Communist party.
2. The guidance of Marxism-Leninism and the thoughts of Mao Tse-tung.
3. The people's democratic dictatorship.
4. The socialist road.

Notwithstanding the above, the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration was ratified by the British Parliament: the Hong Kong Act was enacted in 1985. Now, let me turn to the common law. There are six cardinal features in a Common law system. Let me go over them by examining how these doctrines are entrenched in the Basic Law.

Individual and Legal Rights

The first doctrine is individual and legal rights. Article 27 of the Basic Law guarantees freedom of speech, of the press and of publication etc., freedom of association and of demonstration and even the right to strike. Article 39 of the Basic Law provides for the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and international labour conventions as applied to Hong Kong. The present Legislative Council has full constitutional authority to make a law, for example, to take away your house without paying you a cent (a Hong Kong person's home is not really a castle!). This will, however, not be possible after the Basic Law comes into effect because Articles 6 and

105 of the Basic Law guarantee your property rights.

The Rule of Law

The second doctrine is the oft-mentioned Rule of Law. This doctrine provides that :

1. Every citizen is equal before the law.
2. Every citizen should be entitled to due process of the law, i.e. the law is supreme and there is no arbitrary exercise of power.
3. The law of the rights of individuals is derived from the courts.

Articles 25, 28, and 35 of the Basic Law reinforce these aspects of the Rule of Law (and many people, used to the dogmatic approaches commonly found reported in the newspapers of the Territory, may find it surprising that the phrases ‘Basic Law’ and ‘Rule of Law’ can be found amicably in the same sentence!)

One of the important frameworks supporting the Rule of Law is naturally the checks and balances found in the constitution, combined with the politico-legal concepts of Democracy, Freedom of the Press, and Certainty of the Law. Article 68 of the Basic Law provides that “the ultimate aim is the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage”. Annex II of the Basic Law allows a formula for a directly elected Legislative Council by the year 2011, but not sooner! while Article 27 of the Basic Law guarantees the freedom of the press.

Judicial Independence

Let me move on to the third doctrine: the separation of powers. This is a cardinal feature in a common law judicial system. Article 80 of the Basic Law provides that the courts of the SAR shall exercise the judicial power of the Region. In interpreting a similar provision in the Australian Constitution, the Privy Council has ruled that:

1. judicial power must be exercised by the judiciary exclusively, and no one else; and
2. the judicial cannot exercise other functions, e.g. an administrative function.

Furthermore, Article 85 of the Basic Law provides that “the courts of the Hong Kong SAR shall exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference” and that “members of the judiciary shall be immune from legal action in the performance of their judicial function”. One matter to look into when investigating the presence of an independent judiciary is the appointment and removal of judges. Article 88 of the Basic Law provides that “judges of the HKSAR shall be appointed by the Chief Executive”, but only on the recommendation of an independent commission composed of local judges, members of the legal profession and other sectors. In avoiding a conflict of interest, the Attorney General is not on this list. Articles 62 and 67 of the Chinese constitution clearly state that the power of interpretation

of any law, including the Basic Law, shall be vested in the National People's Congress. However, Article 158 of the Basic Law makes a clear effort to preserve judicial independence in Hong Kong within the limit of the present Chinese constitution by delegating the interpretative power of the Basic Law to the courts in the SAR.

The Adversarial System and the Independent Legal Profession

The fourth doctrine is the adversarial system and an independent legal profession. Article 63 of the Basic Law provides for an independent criminal prosecution authority. Articles 8 and 18 of the Basic Law enable the present common law system to remain unchanged (for 50 years at least).

The Jury System and the Right of Silence and Presumption of Innocence

The fifth and sixth doctrines are the jury system and the right of silence and presumption of innocence. Article 86 of the Basic Law retains the jury system. Articles 8 and 18 of the Basic Law maintain the right of silence and presumption of innocence.

Conclusion

The Basic Law was enacted in accordance with the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration. It has 160 articles and 3 annexes and makes a clear effort to maintain the common law judicial system in Hong Kong. It is a compromise among different factions within China itself. Mr. Deng Xiaoping had to contend with:

left wing elements who do not agree with his policy on economic modernisation;

conservative bureaucrats who do not wish to give up their power;

the rival factions in the Chinese military; and

the regional interests evident for example in Guangdong Province or Shanghai.

Compromising these factional interests was a major achievement. The enactment of the Basic Law is, therefore, a great leap forward in the constitutional history of modern China! As China is embarking on its economic reform, social and political reform will be inevitable. The Basic Law of Hong Kong is part of the Laws of the People's Republic of China. I believe that the day will come when it will be the dominant constitutional document in China rather than a piece of subservient legislation. It will be a blueprint for China's prosperity!

Huang Tsung-hsi (1610-1645) wrote:

Only if there are laws which govern well, will there later be men who govern well. Since 'unlawful laws' fetter men hand-and-foot, even a man capable of governing well cannot overcome the handicaps of senseless restraint and suspicion... Therefore, I say we must first have laws which govern well and later we shall have men who govern well.

At least on paper, the Basic Law provides the people of Hong Kong more rights than under the existing legal system. Whether it will, in fact, operate successfully in Hong Kong very much depends on the political development of China. In the meantime, our Chief Secretary, Mrs. Anson Chan, and our Chief Justice, Sir Ti-liang Yang, are doing their best to assimilate themselves with the socialist legal culture - on 17 November 1995, our outgoing Chief Justice dutifully submitted a report as requested by the Chief Secretary over a controversy surrounding one of his private conversations. I urge the people of Hong Kong to stand firm on the full implementation of the Basic Law. If they do so it will prove to be a success for Hong Kong, and it is therefore expected that it will prove to be the blueprint for China's future constitutional reform and prosperity.

Administrative Centre and Cultural Plaza for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

by

Dr. Nicky Chan

Parsons Brinckerhoff Asia Ltd.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor C.C. Chan, Overseas Visitors and Ladies & Gentlemen:

It is a great honour to be a guest at this evening's function and I first of all would like to express my sincere thanks to Robert Black College and your Acting Master Professor Chan for inviting me. Faced with this august gathering of intellectuals, I might have found it difficult to choose a subject for this talk which might sufficiently be of interest to attract and sustain your attention. Fortunately, as Hong Kong is in the midst of selecting the First Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region which will come into being on 1 July 1997 next year, there is great interest amongst the local population on the topic. Perhaps, if I begin to talk a little about the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, you may be slightly interested and will not fall off to sleep.

We are now quite familiar with the slogan, "One Country, Two Systems; Hong Kong People Ruling Hong Kong; High Degree of Autonomy; and 50 years No Change." This was first enunciated in 1982 by Chinese Leader Deng Xiao Ping as representing China's basic policy towards Hong Kong when China resumes the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong upon the expiry of the New Territories Lease on 30 June 1997. The slogan has been repeated many times by various Chinese leaders ever since. But to us, the Hong Kong people, this slogan was of much importance in that the concepts they encapsulated were elaborated and enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration signed in 1984, and later in the mini-constitution for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region enacted by the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China in 1990.

I will this evening not dwell on the constitutional or political aspects of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I will leave that to our community leaders and politicians on other occasions. What I would like to talk about is a plan for a civic centre to mark the historic establishment of the Hong Special Administrative Region. Hong Kong's population and economic growth have always been greatly influenced by outside factors beyond our control. This coupled with an uncertain future has resulted in the past in inadequate provision of public services and facilities in some areas. For instance we are almost always behind in the provision of housing, good education, road and rail transport etc. Our civic facilities have also been provided on a fairly ad-hoc basis. Thus the official residence and office of the Chief Executive (Governor) have not been expanded for decades despite the vast increase in the volume, intensity and complexity of his responsibilities. The offices of the administration are now scattered

throughout the territory because the present site of the Central Government Offices which was built over 30 years ago is too small to accommodate further expansion. We do not have a decent size civic centre to speak of - Statue Square is simply too tiny for a vibrant city of 6 1/2 million people. The Legislative Council Building was adequate 13 years ago when the former High Court Building was converted for the purpose, but is now proven to be inadequate and two floors of a commercial building several blocks away up the hill have to be acquired to house part of the staff. For any outdoor function involving a large gathering of people, we have to hold it far away from our city centre at Victoria Park at Causeway Bay, the Hong Kong Stadium at Soho or at the Happy Valley Race Course. All these deficiencies have troubled the minds of many community leaders in the past. Although it would be imminently desirable to have all these facilities sited in Central and built large enough to accommodate present and immediate future needs with allowance for further expansion, it has not been possible to find suitable land of adequate size for the purpose. Recently, however, an opportunity has presented itself. Hong Kong Central's waterfront immediately west of the Star Ferry Piers has been reclaimed to enable the construction of the Central Station for the Chek Lap Kok Airport Mass Transit Line as well as a new high capacity East-West highway running parallel to the Waterfront Road. At the same time, reclamation at Wanchai has taken place to accommodate the extension of the Exhibition and Convention Centre Extension construction of which is currently underway to meet the mid 1997 deadline for the sovereignty handover ceremony. This leaves a re-entrant between these two reclamations that needs to be filled not only to provide for the extension of the Chek Lap Kok Airport mass transit rail line eastwards and for the new highway mentioned earlier, but also to eliminate the dead body of water in which floating garbage now accumulates in order to improve the flow of seawater. The Hong Kong Government proposes to put commercial and some isolated Government office development on this proposed reclamation, but is meeting opposition from the green lobby which simply wants no more reclamation of the harbour. My proposition is that this re-entrant needs to be filled for essential transport infrastructure provision as well as to improve environmental conditions. And if reclamation takes place which I believe it must, I together with Dr. Raymond Wu, the Preliminary Working Committee and Preparatory Committee member responsible for cultural affairs and Mr. Bosco Ho, a public-spirited architect, propose to plan a Civic Centre in this area including inter-alia, an Administrative Centre and a Cultural Plaza.

Russia : Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

by

Dr. Alexander A. Mikhalev

Department of Mechanics and Mathematics

Moscow State Russia University

It is a great honour to be invited as a speaker on Guest Night at Robert Black College. I am very delighted that the College Master Professor W.S. Leung suggested this topic for my lecture. It is hoped that we study history for the sake of our present and our future. It is fortunate that by chance we are touching on Russian History on January 7, the day of Russian Christmas, according to the old calendar of Russian Orthodox Church.

To know more about the root causes for the existence of so much diversity in Russia now one has to look at three periods : Russian Empire (up to 1917); the Soviet Union; and modern Russia.

Russian Empire

Slavs inhabited the areas of East Central Europe in prehistoric times, and reached most of their present limits by 850. The first ruler to consolidate Slavic tribes was Rurik, leader of Russians, who established himself at Novgorod in 862. He and his immediate successors had Scandinavian affiliations. In 882 the Ancient Russian State was founded. The Kievan state adopted Eastern Christianity under Vladimir, later modified by Slav influences. Important as organizer and lawmaker was Yaroslav, 1019-1054, whose daughters married Kings of Norway, Hungary and France. His grandson, Vladimir II (Monomach), 1113-1125, was progenitor of several rulers. His son, Yuri Dolgorukii, founded Moscow in 1147. Alexander Pushkin wrote:

“Moscow: those syllables can start
A tumult in the Russian heart.”

In 1169 Andrew Bogolubskii, a son of Yuri Dolgorukii, overthrew Kiev and began the line of Grand Dukes of Vladimir. The Kievan state was overrun by the Mongols (1238). Only the northern trading republic of Novgorod remained independent. Alexander Nevsky, the Grand Duke of Vladimir, had a son, Daniel, first to be called Duke of Moscow, who ruled 1294-1303. His successors became Grand Dukes of Moscow. After Dimitri III Donskoi defeated the Tatars in 1380, they also became Grand Dukes of all Russia. Considerable territorial expansion was achieved under Ivan III, 1462-1505, who was referred to in church ritual as Tsar (Caesar). He married Sofia, niece of the last Byzantine emperor, and set up an Independent Russian Orthodox Church. Ivan IV, the “Terrible”, crowned in 1547 as Tsar of all the Russians, ruled until 1584 (this period was marked by joining of Kazan in 1552, now the capital of Tatarstan in Russia, joining of Astrakhan in 1556, the beginning of Russian printing, the reunion of Russia and Ukraina in 1564, and joining of Siberia in 1581-1582). Under the weak rule of his son, Feodor I, 1584-1598, Boris Godunov had control, the dynasty died, and after years of tribal strike and intervention by Polish and Swedish armies, the Russians unified under 17-year-old Michael Romanov,

distantly related to the first wife of Ivan IV (he ruled 1613-1645 and established the Romanov line).

Peter I, the fourth ruler after Michael, 1682-1725, known as Peter the Great, took the title of Emperor in 1721, and Russia was proclaimed an Empire. His successors were Catherine (1725), Peter II (1727-1730), Anne (1730), Ivan V, Ivan VI (1740-1741), Elizabeth (1741), Peter III (1761), Catherine II (former princess of Anhalt Zerbst, Germany), who is known as Catherine the Great (1762-1796). Under Peter I and Catherine II borders of Russia continued to expand in all directions, trade and cultural contacts with the West multiplied from the new Baltic Sea capital, St. Petersburg, which was founded in 1703. Moscow State University was founded in 1755, and since that time it has been the biggest university in Russia.

Alexander I (1801-1825), the grandson of Catherine II, defeated Napoleon, the disastrous 1812 invasion of Russia exposed Napoleon's overextensions. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815 the monarchs and princes of Europe redrew their boundaries, the settlement brought 50 years of international peace to Europe. But it was unable to check the advance of liberal ideas among European nations. The 1825 December uprising by liberal officers in Russia was easily suppressed by Nicholas I, who played an important role for the future of Russia. 1861 is the date of abolition of serfdom in Russia.

Russia completed the expansion south by 1884 (despite the temporary setback of the Crimean War with Turkey, Britain and France, 1853-56), taking Turkestan, all the Caucasus and some areas in the East. The population of Russian Empire approached 150 million in 1900. Reforms and an industrial boom in the 1880s (oil, railroad) created the beginning of a modern state despite the autocratic tsarist regime. An industrial crisis after 1900, harvest failures, poverty in the urban proletariat, the 1904-1905 defeat by Japan sparked the revolution of 1905-1907. A Duma (parliament) was created, and an agricultural reform (under Stolypin, the prime minister in 1906-1911) created a large class of landowning peasants. Nicholas II, 1894-1917, the last Tsar of Russia was forced to abdicate by the Revolution and military defeats in World War I. A liberal provisional government (Lvov and Kerensky as premiers) failed to end the war and was overthrown in Petrograd in November 1917. Thus, the October Socialist Revolution (Bolshevik Revolution) marked the crush of the Russian Empire.

Soviet Union

After the October Revolution the Council of People's Commissars was formed, with Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov) as the Premier. The Bolsheviks ended the war with Germany (with a not very popular in Russia Brest-Litovsk peace in March 1918). Civil war in Russia broke out in the summer 1918 between the Red Army under Bolsheviks and the opposition including monarchists, anarchists, nationalists and also US, British, French, Japanese units. The Tsar Nicholas II, the Empress, the Tsesarevich (Crown Prince) and the Tsar's 4 daughters were murdered in Ekaterinburg (July 16, 1918). The Civil war devastated the country until the 1920 Red Army victory, and the Communist Party leadership was established.

The New Economic Policy (NEP, 1921) allowed landownership by peas-

ants and some private commerce and industry. Lenin died on January 21, 1924. Rykov and Molotov held his office, but the actual ruler became Joseph Stalin (Joseph Vissarionovich Djugashvili), the general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In 1922 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, the Soviet Union) was founded. Rapid industrialization in Russia was achieved through successive 5-year-plans starting 1928 on the base of severe labor discipline and mass forced labor. Industry was financed by a decline in living standards and exploration of agriculture which was almost totally collectivized by the early 1930s (kolkhoz, collective farm; sovkhoz, state farm).

On May 7, 1941, Stalin became President of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. The Second World War started in Europe in September 1939. On June 22, 1941, three million Axis fascist troops (Axis: Berlin-Rome-Tokyo) invaded the Soviet Union marching through the Ukrania to the Caucasus and through White Russia and the Baltic republics to Moscow and Leningrad. The Great Patriotic War began for the Soviet Union. The severe battles of Moscow (30.09.1941 - 20.04.1942), of Leningrad (10.07.1941 - 9.08.1944, 900 days), of Stalingrad (12.07.1942 - 2.02.1943, 200 days), of Kursk (5.07.1943 - 23.08.1943) stopped the German troops ushering in a new phase of World War II. The Second Front of USA and Great Britain was opened on July 7, 1944, in Normandy. The Second World War was finished in Europe on May 7, 1945, and on August 14, 1945, in Japan. Immediately after the end of World War II the so-called "Cold War" took place between West and East socialist countries. But the ideas of peaceful coexistence and the struggle for peace were very popular among the population. As an example we cite the song: Do Russian People Stand for War? (words by E. Evtushenko, music by E. Kolmanovsky):

*Do Russian people stand for war?
Go, ask the calm on plain and shore,
The wide expanse of field and lea,
The birches and the poplar tree.
The soldiers who once fought abreast,
And near the birches lie at rest,
Their sons will answer by the score.*

*Ask them if Russians are,
Ask them if Russians are,
Ask them if Russians are for war.*

*Not only for their country's life
Did soldiers perish in the strife,
But that all human creatures might
Sleep always peacefully at night.
Ask those that fearful battles knew,
Who on the Elbe rejoiced with you,
We keep these memories evermore.*

*And ask if Russians are,
And ask if Russians are,
And ask if Russians are for war.
Yes, we indeed know how to fight,
But do not want the same sad plight
That soldiers should be killed again
And lie upon the blood-drenched plain.
Ask mothers if we are for strife,
Go, ask this question of my wife,
And you will need to ask no more.*

*If Russian people are,
If Russian people are,
If Russian people are for war.*

*The working people of each land
Will come, for sure, to understand
Throughtout the world on sea and shore.*

*If Russian people are,
If Russian people are,
If Russian people are for war.*

In the “thaw” after Stalin’s death in 1953, relations of the USSR with the West improved just a bit under Khrushchev’s leadership, but Hungarian events in 1956 and the 1960 American U-2 spy plane episode with many other incidents renewed East-West tension. Large outlays on research and development in the USA and the USSR focused on military applications (H-bomb in USA and USSR, 1952-1953; intercontinental missiles, late 1950s).

In October 1957 the first man-made sputnik (satellite) was launched in the Soviet Union. On April 12, 1961, Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen, made the first space flight on board the sputnik-spaceship “Vostok” (“East”). Mankind’s dream has come true, man has gone into outer space and successfully returned to earth.

West German treaties with Russia and Poland confirmed postwar boundaries. Caribbean USA-USSR crisis in 1962 showed how close we approached the third nuclear World War.

Khrushchev was ousted on October 14-15, 1964, and replaced by Leonid I. Brezhnev as first secretary of the Communist Party (and later in 1977 as President).

Soviet influence, checked in particular in Egypt, Angola, Ethiopia, exacerbated by the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. This war was very unpopular among the population of the Soviet Union, especially taking into account the experience of the USA in the former Vietnamese war.

1980-1985 were troublesome years with three consecutive heads of state dying in office (Brezhnev, 1982; Andropov, 1984; Chernenko, 1985).

A boycott by the USA of Moscow Olympics in 1980 had as a result a boycott of Los Angeles Olympics in 1984 by the most Eastern European countries.

As elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR on March 11, 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev promoted political and economic reform within the Soviet Union and in its relations with the outside world (“glasnost”, “perestroika”).

In 1987 the USSR and the USA signed the treaty, eliminating all Soviet and American intermediate range nuclear missiles.

The Soviet Union 9-year military presence in Afghanistan ended as the last Soviet troops left Kabul on February 5, 1989, clearing away a major impediment to better relations between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world.

Mikhail Gorbachev was elected President of the Soviet Union by the Soviet Parliament, the Congress of People’s Deputies, on May 25, 1989, thus he was the first and at the same time the last President of the USSR. In 1991 Russian Federation, Ukraina and Byelorussia proclaimed the end of the USSR. Boris Yeltsin became the President of Russian Federation.

Modern Russia

Today Russia has an area of more than 17 million square kilometers and a population of about 150 million. The names Russia and Russian Federation are equivalent. Russia is a President Republic and a Federative State.

The highest forms of people’s power are referendum and free elections. Parliament of Russia has two Houses: the Russian Federation Council and the State Duma. The Russian Federation Council consists of the representatives of units of the federation. The State Duma has 450 elected members. The state power in Russia consists of the President, the Parliament (with two Houses) and the Courts of Russia.

Liberalization of prices, cancellation of savings of citizens, privatization of the state property, discussions about the state structure of Russia (President or Parliament Republic), primary accumulation of capital, ... these uneasy processes are taking place in Russia today.

For a long period in the Russian history, Moscow was the capital of Russia. Now the population of Moscow is about 9 million. The population of so-called “big Moscow” (Moscow and Moscow region) is about 15 million. Moscow is the main financial centre of Russia. The Mayor of Moscow is now Prof. Y. M. Luzhkov, who continues to develop Moscow dynamically despite the arguments about the current crisis.

At the same time Moscow has always been the main centre of Russia in culture, education and science. For example, the Moscow State University (MSU) was founded in 1755 by Empress Elizaveta Petrovna. Since that time, the day of Saint Tatiana has been the main celebration of all students of Russia. M.V. Lomonosov, the first Russian academician, played the most significant role in developing MSU.

The Moscow State University has a longstanding tradition of academic

excellence. At this oldest and most famous Russian university scientific and educational schools of an international reputation have been formed. Among its graduates and professors there are Nobel Prize winners and world known scientists. At present there are more than 8,000 tutors and research associates working at Moscow State University. About 4500 professors hold PhD and Doctor of Science Honours Degrees and 125 from them are members of the Russian Academy of Science. More than 25 thousand undergraduate students are taking their courses at Moscow State University and about 6 thousand are working on their PhD projects. The number of foreign students and postgraduates among them is about two thousand and the number increases every year.

The University is recognized worldwide as a great research centre. It includes a number of scientific research institutes specialized in the most significant areas of modern science such as Mechanics, Nuclear Physics, Astronomy, Lasers, Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Anthropology, Materials Sciences, Ecology, Information Technologies and others. Moscow State University has a solid tradition of preparing students for advanced degrees and successful careers. According to the tradition, the departments are called "faculties" meaning the same as "schools" in the UK and USA. At present, Moscow State University includes 20 faculties offering BA/BSc, MA/MSc, PhD, DSc, MD programmes in science and humanities.

Moscow Kremlin (the Kremlin) used to be the residence for the top persons of Russia. Now the Kremlin is the Residence of the President of Russian Federation.

Future of Russia

First of all it is important to make a right choice of the political line (between a bourgeois democracy and a new communist orientation) without a new civil war. Boris Yeltsin was reelected in 1996 as the President of Russia for the second term on the next 4 years. By the Constitution of Russian Federation it is not possible to be the President for more than two terms. Hence, at the end of this century Russia will have new elections. Russian outlook on global security partnership is changing: what will tomorrow's world look like in geopolitical terms?

Note also some problems plaguing Russia and other CIS countries at the moment. The general situation in Russian industry should be changed. Will the Russian government be able to fulfill the promises made by the President during the election campaign regarding repayment of arrears in wages to tens of thousands of miners, school teachers and other state workers? Outflow of Russian scientists to other countries is connected with the financial problems in the higher education system and in scientific institutes.

It is important to know whether the Cheshen problems will be resolved in a political way, or the military option is the only solution. What can Russia do to attract investors from the West and the East? Russian-Ukrainian problems in connection with Crimea and Sebastopol are not easy to solve and the reunion process with Byelorussia is very complicated.

American Politics

by

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Since the beginning of political time, politicians have used their power to build their bank accounts and satisfy their libidos. Israelite kings and Roman senators provide the early examples (though I am sure there are earlier ones), and the cases multiply over the centuries. Every time I read about another one, I am shocked, shocked — exactly as I am supposed to be. I know that that sort of thing is wrong; I've even written a book to explain why it is wrong. Still, the cases don't excite me; I rapidly lose interest in the media's and the legal system's endless pursuit of detail. (What is best about the David and Bathsheba story is its brevity; God sent a prophet to condemn the king; there was no congressional investigation.) So let indignant citizens organize against personal corruption. I am sure that they are doing the right thing. But for the moment, at least, I'm not marching.

The sex is too uninteresting, and in any case sexual pleasure is one of the more equally distributed goods of our society. Whatever added pleasure power brings, the addition, so long as it isn't coerced, isn't outrageous (I don't mean that it is irrelevant to our moral and political judgements). Money is more problematic in the United States today, because inequalities of wealth are already outrageous. Still, consider what was at stake in, say, the Whitewater case, and compare it to the salaries, stock options, and golden parachutes of contemporary corporate executives: the stakes even in a major political scandal are "small potatoes".

In a democratic society, there is something worse than the conversion of power into wealth or sex, and that is the conversion of power into more power. That's the issue, for example, in the accusations of tax fraud against Newt Gingrich. He used public money to strengthen his political hand, and that's not small potatoes, whatever the amount of money involved. Gingrich's televised college course reflects a deep confusion between scholarship and the search for knowledge, on the one hand, and ideological partisanship and the search for votes, on the other. Anyone concerned about the integrity of our politics and our schools should be out there marching.

Even more obviously, the emerging scandal about Democratic Party fundraising isn't small potatoes — and, again, not because of the sums involved. This story, like Gingrich's, is about political rather than personal corruption: the use (more precisely, the sale) of power in order to raise money to finance a campaign to win more power. No money was siphoned off into private bank accounts; everyone was working for the cause. In a democracy, however, the cause has to be advanced in another way — not by satisfying the wealthy few but by persuading the (relatively) penniless many.

Admittedly, the Democrats were playing catch-up. The money of the wealthy few flows more naturally into Republican coffers, and as campaigns have gotten more expensive, this has given the GOP a greater and greater advantage. I am inclined to think that it is to the Democrats' credit that they can only get the money they need by behaving corruptly, while Republicans get it by behaving with conviction. Still, it is a bad business, and the claim that contributors to the party got no political return isn't a believable defense. A policy of "no return" would make future fundraising very difficult. Surely the word would get around in the circles of the wealthy: the Democrats want our money but they are really committed to working men and women. Wish that it were true!

Corruption takes different forms in different times and places, depending on the political and social systems. Our current scandals derive first from an electoral process in which private money is allowed to have a very big impact, subject only to minimal controls. And it derives, second, from an economy where private money is very unequally distributed. There are, then, two ways of reducing this kind of corruption. We can bar the use of private money in the electoral process and finance political campaigns with public funds. Or we can redistribute private money so that ordinary citizens have a more equal chance to influence elections with their financial contributions, just as they do now with their contributions of time and energy.

I have always preferred the second option, since contributing money (and time and energy) to political campaigns seems to me a very good thing to do. It is an expression of individual commitment, and in the political process as a whole it is a signal of intensity. All of us have the same single vote, and it makes no difference whether we cast it with resignation or with enthusiasm. But these degrees of support should make a difference; the political process should be sufficiently complex so that it is able to register them. So I should be able to give nothing but my vote to this candidate (for the House, say) while giving a vote and a check to that candidate (for the Senate, say). And perhaps there is a third candidate (for City Council, say), who is even closer to my own views, to whom I give a vote, and a check, and hours of my time knocking on doors or making phone calls — and if I can't spare those hours, I try to give a bigger check. Now I am able to distinguish myself from other supporters of the same three candidates, who rank them differently. And the political process should take note of all these differences, and somehow sum them up.

This kind of engagement, differentiated by degrees, makes it clear that democratic politics isn't a matter of voting only. But it won't work unless citizens come to the political process with relatively similar — they don't have to be identical — resources. And since we are so far from that happy condition, publicly funded campaigns are probably the best we can do right now. Public funding works well in a number of European countries, which have also managed, perhaps because they control the money, to set sensible limits on the length of campaigns. No doubt, this system would make it harder for me to register the intensity of my convictions with the small

impact to which I am entitled, but it would also make it harder for people with deeper pockets to register their intensity with the more substantial impact to which they are not entitled.

I would only suggest a small qualification to any radical ban on private fundraising. We should allow candidates like Clinton and Dole in 1996 to organize bake sales. Then, if they have a lot of enthusiastic supporters willing to do a lot of baking and selling, they will end up with extra money, which they should be allowed to spend freely on their campaigns. Rummage sales are also all right. And candidates can raise private money for political uses by selling lemonade and washing cars. Of course, I worry that, with clever lawyers, this may prove too big a loophole. But the risk is worth taking; the scale is right for a democratic society. I don't even mind if foreign businessmen squeeze some of the lemons.

Toxic Seafood

by

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In study after study, sperm counts in men the world over are on the decline. In the 1950's the typical male had about 80 million sperm per ml of semen. Today the typical male living in a developed country has only about one half to one third of this number of sperm (20 to 30 million per ml (Harriss and Hohenemser 1978). A sperm count of less than 20 million can often spell infertility (ibid).

According to Khatamee of New York City's Fertility Research Foundation (NYCFRF), only about 8% of the men who came to NYCFRF for consultation in the 1960's had a fertility problem. Today that number has increased to 40%. The reasons for this drop in male fertility ranged from heavy smoking to drug use, stress and ingestion of food containing elevated levels of organochlorines and/or mercury. The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between male fertility and mercury in the hair of people living in Hong Kong.

Suter (1975) reported prolonged, but reversible, effects on fertility after a single intraperitoneal injection of 10 mg/kg methyl mercuric hydroxide in male mice. Decreased fertility in male mice received a single intraperitoneal dose of 1 mg/kg methylmercuric hydroxide (Lee and Dixon 1975). This finding occurred between 35 and 65 days after treatment and was associated with altered spermatogenesis.

Following the oral administration of either organic or inorganic mercury compounds to rats, accumulation of mercury in the lysosomes of Sertoli cells of the seminiferous tubules and interstitial tissues occurred (Ernst and Lauritsen 1991). Mohamed et al. (1987) found evidence to suggest that methyl mercury interference with dye in microtubule sliding assemblies in mitochondrial energy production. This may explain the decreased spermatozoan motility observed in their vivo monkey studies (Mohamed et al. 1987). Mercury deposits were localized in the membranes of the midpiece and tail piece of spermatozoan following inorganic mercury exposure. In vivo studies suggested that metallic mercury vapors may cause increases in the rate of spontaneous abortions in humans (Cordier et al. 1991).

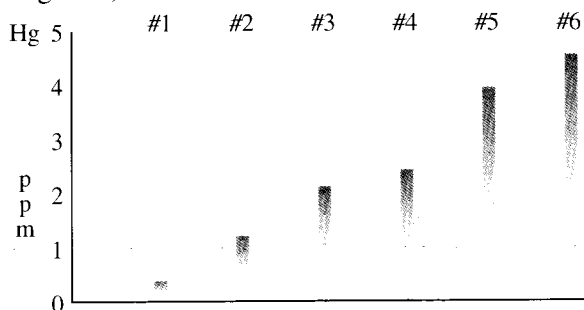
Hair samples from each male examined at the In vitro fertilization Centre in Hong Kong were sent to Doctor's Data in Chicago for ICP heavy metal analysis as described in the methods section. The present study examines the relationship between male fertility and mercury levels in 159 Hong Kong males between the ages of 25 and 72, and a much smaller number of Hong Kong women and Hong Kong vegetarians of both sexes (Fig. 1).

The following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Mercury in the hair of 117 subfertile males in Hong Kong was significantly higher than its level in the hair of 42 fertile males.
2. Although other studies reported that mercury can alter human spermatogenesis, data collected in this study are insufficient to permit us to conclude that mercury was the cause of subfertility in the 117 individuals reported on here.
3. Mercury concentrations in human hair increased with age for ages 25 to 72.
4. The mean concentration of mercury in freshwater fish (0.0987) sold in Hong Kong was not significantly different from the concentration of mercury in marine fish (0.1186 ppm).
5. Mercury concentrations found in the hair of 159 Hong Kong males aged 25 to 72 (mean = 3.9 ppm) was positively correlated with age and was significantly higher in Hong Kong subjects than in European (1.2 ppm) and Finnish subjects (2.1 ppm).
6. Hair samples collected from vegetarians living in Hong Kong that have consumed no fish, shellfish or meat for at least the last 5 years had very low levels of mercury (0.38 ppm, n = 16).
7. If one agrees that food containing mercury should not annually be consumed at a rate greater than the rate that our bodies can rid of mercury then the maximum permitted mercury level in food sold in Hong Kong should be lowered from 0.5 ppm to 0.3 ppm.

Levels of Mercury in Human Hair from 6 Groups

1. HK Vegetarians who eat no meat or fish or shellfish Hg = 0.38 ppm (n = 16)
2. European male + female combined subjects 1.2 ppm (n = large sample size)
3. Finnish males and females combined had hair mercury of 2.1 ppm (n = large sample size)
4. Hong Kong females Hg = 2.4 ppm (n = 35, mean age = 39)
5. Hong Kong fertile males Hg = 3.9 ppm (n = 159, mean age 37)
6. Mercury in the hair of subfertile Hong Kong males = 4.5 ppm (n = 117, mean age = 46)



Levels of mercury in hair samples from six groups

Figure 1

Inter-acting with the Chinese Government

by

Mr. Frederick K.K. Fung

Chairman, The Hong Kong Association of Democracy and
People's Livelihood

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. It is my greatest honour to be here and have the opportunity to speak to you all. Before I made my speech, I have three apologies to make: Firstly, one who speaks three languages is trilingual; one who speaks two languages is bilingual; but one who speaks one language only is me. Whenever I speak English, it sounds the same to those who speak English and to those who don't. It is Greek to them all.

I am rather handicapped in English and I have full sympathy in you as you have to make extra efforts to understand what I am saying. At the same time, you have to give me sufficient allowance that I have already made the greatest efforts to make myself intelligible. The situation with my Putonghua is not much better. Once I asked Mr Zhou Nan if I could speak Cantonese in the Preparatory Committee. His response was negative. He said I had to speak in Putonghua so that the secretaries could take notes. I therefore continued in Cantonese but said that it was my Putonghua already and miraculously the secretaries could understand.

I have to deliver my second apology with a story. Once there was a Mr Common living in the northern part of the New Territories. His life had been very uneventful and the greatest excitement he had was his witnessing the floods of the Shenzhen River. One day he died and he was in heaven. St. Peter asked him if he had any special request. Mr Common said he would like to speak to a big audience about the floods in Sheung Shui and Yuen Long in the 90s. St. Peter arranged the meeting accordingly and informed Mr Common of the schedule. "But just one thing," said St. Peter. "I have to tell you that one person in the audience will be a guy named Noah." I know that there are many Noahs in the audience tonight, but I hope I can share some of my vision and experience in interacting with China so as to solicit for your wisdom and perspective in the many issues related. I begin to understand why the organizer asked me to bring ten guests of my own. She has to make sure there will be at least some hands clapping when I finish.

Thirdly, it relates to a very current incident that took place just two days ago. I, together with my colleagues, walked out of the meeting of the Provisional Legislature. It clearly demonstrates that I am quite out of place in the Chinese establishment. Thus, I am here to share with you many of my difficulties as I grope my way through. Right, I do not come to show off any track record of success. I come here to share why we believe in the necessity to interact with China even though there are lots of obstacles and the cost may be high. One example of the high cost that I paid took place just a few months ago. Some of my closest colleagues pulled out from our

Association of Democracy and People's Livelihood because of the different views on whether we should join the Provisional Legislature. Before I elaborate on this incident, let me go back a bit further into the history.

My experience in community organization began in 1975 when I was working in the Society for Community Organization. The experience then should be seen as a successful one as we could recall a number of issues with impact — namely, the redevelopment of Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate, Boat People, Elderly, etc. At that time, the trend was to strengthen the muscle of the pressure groups to wrestle with the Colonial Government. In 1983, after I returned from England, there was a new dimension in the establishment — direct election into the District Board. Many of my friends were suspicious with the government's intention. They thought the government used this to absorb the opposition, some window dressing to paint a rosy picture. They might have rightly felt that way. However, I, having been away for a few years, began to look at the possible gains from other perspectives. I thought that joining the establishment might help us exert even greater pressure because

- (1) we would have a status, we would have access to the bureaucrats, we would have access to many of the information we needed, subsequently, we would have more channels to lobby for support and changes
- (2) we would have a platform to make our statement and
- (3) we would have more resources, namely, space for offices, financial subsidy from the government to establish organizations to monitor the government.

Furthermore, the organizations on the one hand position us with the grassroots and on the other hand, give us strength. My innovative idea was considered deviant then. I could not convince too many people other than myself to run the election. Though cynical towards my proposal, many people were curious and I had enormous support from more than 500 very high-calibre volunteers to campaign for my first seat in the Urban Council in 1983. Soon afterwards, not only that people began to join the establishment quite readily, in 1985, there were even mass campaigns petitioning for direct election in 1988. Today, all the hard-liners of pressure groups like Lau Chin Shek, Li Cheuk Yan, etc. are in the Legislative Council. However, you do not find their voices any weaker.

The different levels of elections held in recent years have helped to educate the silent majority a lot on the subject of participation in politics which has been almost a taboo for so long. Another encouraging point is that even the pro China groups joined the election. It is a good sign that they are brave enough to test the water, and try to participate in elections. The rule of the election game is democracy. If they have confidence in themselves to survive in the democratic atmosphere, the risk of political regression will be much lower. All these breakthroughs would not have taken

place if we had refrained from interacting with the Colonial Government in the establishment.

Given this background, you may not find it too difficult to understand why we were so ready to interact with the Chinese authority through all possible channels including joining the establishment. In the year 1986 when our association — Association of Democracy and People's Livelihood — was established, three of the founding members were members of the Consultative Committee for the Basic Law. Such linkages were cut in 1989 after the June 4 Incident. The period of non communication was a time we had no progress in almost everything. With the transfer of sovereignty soon, we started to review the policy in 1991. We laid down conditions for resuming our interaction with China. While we would not participate in any social functions, we would liaise with Chinese officials on issues related to

- (1) the transition of Hong Kong,
- (2) the modernization and democratization of China and
- (3) the unification of the country.

Our stand is, even though we are the minority, we will not exclude ourselves from the establishment, so that we can have sufficient common ground to have dialogue with the Chinese officials. Yet we will not forget our role as a pressure group outside so as to reinforce our voice inside the establishment. We know we are the minority, yet with a combination of the influences both inside and outside the establishment, the impact should be much greater than making use of just either one of the two roles.

Amongst members of our association, the consensus in this direction is strong. However, differences in whether or not we should join the Provisional Legislature began to surface just about half a year ago. Some members had difficulties in accepting this as ideologically speaking, we were against the setting up of this provisional body. Some of those more pessimistic members concluded that China's insistence on establishing a provisional legislature was to fling some of the "undesirable" members out of the system, just a prelude to other harsher restrictions on Hong Kong. We therefore should not be part of the dirty game. However, the majority's estimation of the scenario was a different one. We cannot see any strong reason for the Chinese government to turn Hong Kong into a mess. Economically, Chinese capital is one of the largest stake holders in Hong Kong. Their investment in Hong Kong exceeds 20 billion US dollars. At present, one third of Chinese income of foreign exchange is obtained through Hong Kong. There is no reason why China should not be eager to maintain Hong Kong's stability and prosperity. At the same time, China looks forward to having substantial development in economy itself and this directive also helps to safeguard Hong Kong from any unnecessary turmoil.

Politically, the concept of one country, two systems is actually a reassurance for Taiwan. So long as the Chinese government still sees Hong Kong as a show case of the feasibility of Mr Deng's directive, they will

have to make the concept work, and make it work well. Besides, signs have shown that China is trying to play a more active and more important role in the international political arena. China just cannot let Hong Kong jeopardise its image. It is our observation that Chinese officials are much more open-minded and receptive than before and we have an impression that they are confident enough to let Hong Kong people rule Hong Kong. However, dealing with China is one matter, dealing with people who are too eager to please China is a different story.

One of our strongest arguments in joining the Provisional Legislature is: It is the beauty of democracy that different opinions can be expressed. However when a decision is made, whether or not it is what you want, you have to play according to the agreed resolution. Should we boycott the decision which we do not agree with, it is actually against the spirit of democracy. Yet there were still some members, some hard core ones, who chose to leave our Association at that point and I am still quite upset about it. These members have all been involved in the many issues over the last few years which did raise the threshold of the Chinese political culture. In February of 1992, in a meeting with Mr Lu Ping, we were the first to formally express our request for redefining the June 4 Incident. In August that year, we visited Beijing to lobby for the drafting of the 1995 political reform according to Basic Law and Human Rights Ordinance.

In the following year, we proposed to Beijing to continue to submit human rights reports to UN after 1997 and their response then was that they would give it some thought. Subsequently we requested the British government to see how the reports could be channeled as China is not a signatory party of the human rights covenant. The then British Foreign Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, had promised to communicate directly with Mr. Qian Qi Chen on the subject. In our follow-up visit, Mr Wang Feng Chou of the Hong Kong & Macau Affairs Office informed us of the official decision that in principle, the Chinese government would agree to submit the human rights reports after 1997. For the appeal of the Hong Kong reporter, Mr Xi Yang, arrested in Beijing, we staged a protest march in Beijing with all the signatures collected in Hong Kong to petition for Mr Xi's release. Despite all these untraditional moves, members of our Association were still invited to various advisory and consultative bodies in the Chinese establishment. It helped to test the limits or the tolerance level of the Chinese government. Personally, I think it is already higher than I have expected.

In March, 1996, after I had cast the first "no" vote in the Preparatory Committee on the subject of establishing the Provisional Legislature, the remarks of Mr Lu Ping did make a scene. The incident epitomised the different chemistry of the two different political cultures. The Chinese officials were quick to moderate the cultural shock to all parties concerned and try to mend the damage done on their image. It is a good sign showing that they have learnt a lesson from it. Another example of the positive effect of our dual roles was on the issue of problems of real estate business in China. Many Hong Kong buyers suffered great losses as the construction projects

could not be completed. The victims had sought help from some pro China group. They had connections to help victims meet with Chinese government officials in the southern provinces. However, as the scale of the problems was too big, the pro China group was not willing to help to press further. The victims then turned to us. We tried to bring the case to the central government and negotiation on compensation is now under way and new policy is being drafted to monitor similar business activities.

Our other costs to pay is that our profile remains unclear to many people as they expect to see two poles of extremes — either black or white — as far as connection with China is concerned. There are either dissidents to criticise and demonstrate outside the establishment or the other extreme will be those faithful insiders who would render unquestionable support to the Chinese authority. As we are neither here nor there, we have a lonely battle to fight. We also have more battles to fight as both side harbour some hostility towards us — a funny combination of something similar to themselves but not quite the same in nature. To sum up, we do have broken some new grounds in the political space of China. The effects are :

Reflect the voice of the grassroots and the democrats.

Solicit for more chances and channels of communication and lobbying.

Increase the interaction of the two different political cultures so as to help China to understand the politics in Hong Kong style. The chemistry and dynamics will catalyse positive changes in the political culture of the Chinese side.

I would not exclude the possibility that China sees our role as window dressing. It is always a win-win situation which can bring about the best outcome for both parties. I am a social reformist. I do not see it right to campaign for drastic and radical changes or revolutions. China has had too many of them in her painful history. We are looking for expansion of new space for political development. It takes good timing, the right place and the appropriate people to make it happen. In blazing this new track, we need your wisdom to help us to head for the right direction.

The Jurisprudence of the Basic Law

by

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My topic was the way the legal profession in Hong Kong has handled the legal aspects of the handover to Chinese rule, and my theme was that we had handled them very poorly. Principally, we have studied and understood very little of the Basic Law, yet the Basic Law introduces a wholly new constitutional system requiring a fresh set of ideas and perspectives as well as much study and research. The final text of the Basic Law was published in 1990. Since then it has received scarce attention from academics (with the exception of my colleague, Yash Ghai, who has written an excellent book on it). It is doubtful whether, by 1 July 1997, many legal practitioners had even read the Basic Law. The Attorney General's Chambers, and a small number of law firms and barristers' chambers, held one or two hastily organised short courses very late in the transition period. The Judicial Studies Board had one session on the topic - just one, for judges whose professional lives would henceforth be devoted to operating this entirely new constitutional system - and it was dominated by a speaker whose views had been opposed by many academic colleagues (when I called the chairman of the board and asked for equal time to present my own analysis he said they had no time for further sessions on the Basic Law). The Faculty of Law held an international conference on 'constitutional transition' just a month before the handover - it was virtually boycotted by the local legal profession. One day of our annual two-day law lectures for practitioners in 1997 was devoted to the Basic Law, but the response from the profession was pathetic. Lawyers, it seems, had neither the time nor the interest to learn about the new constitution in advance; they would wait until a pertinent issue arose and then 'bone up' as required to deal with particular cases.

This technique, however, though perfectly appropriate in general, is not an adequate one so far as the Basic Law is concerned. On 1 July last year Hong Kong was granted a new legal order. Its premise was no longer the authority of the British as manifested in the sovereignty of the British Parliament. The local legislature was no longer restricted solely by the feeble constraints of the Letters Patent - another document which lawyers probably never read - and by Acts of Parliament applying to Hong Kong. For the first time Hong Kong had a codified, controlled constitution with real breadth and possibly real teeth, one that was designed to implement solemn promises made to the community in an international agreement in 1984. Yet the mindset of the legal profession and the judiciary seemed dominated by the notion of sovereignty, one which many scholars believe was the nineteenth-century invention of Albert Dicey - well, Dicey didn't invent the concept, which was the result of the rise of nation states in Europe and the collapse

of the medieval world order, but he gave it its most eloquent analysis and expression in relation to the British constitution. Dicey's account of the legally unlimited powers of Parliament has long been seen in the academy as the legal counterpart of British imperial power, one which is no longer realistic or appropriate in the modern world. It is an elegantly simple idea, however, and must have seemed adequate for a British colony unadvanced towards representative government and dominated by an appointed Governor. Its rejection by many academic theorists had had little influence on British and British-trained lawyers, and British judges have resiled from it only very recently and in response to Britain's entry into the European system. Hong Kong's colonial constitution, a typical constitution for nineteenth-century 'crown' colonies, established the institutions of government but scarcely limited their powers. It has been replaced by a document which, like many other modern constitutions, is capable of playing a very much greater role in the allocation and definition of authority. It needs to be approached very differently. It must be understood through comparative analysis and an intellectual process far removed from the simple application of the idea of sovereignty.

That lawyers and judges have not adapted their thinking to this new legal order is evident from two cases decided since the handover. One of them involved a challenge to Executive Order No 1 issued by the Chief Executive to control the civil service, an instrument whose validity is suspect by virtue of its apparent breach of the separation of powers inherent in the Basic Law. Because the separation of powers is 'inherent' in the Basic Law, it cannot be easily perceived simply by reading the text. It must be extricated through a deep understanding of the new constitutional arrangements, and the clues to this understanding come from experience in other countries with similar constitutions. But the judge showed no appreciation of the possibilities and dismissed the claim. The separation of powers is frequently alleged to be a cardinal principle of the British constitution, but it is there a political rather than a legal doctrine. Under the Basic Law, however, it is arguably of fundamental legal importance, capable of striking down post-handover executive orders which exercise legislative authority and also surviving pre-handover institutions established when the doctrine had no such pre-eminence.

The other case is the better-known HKSAR v David Ma, where the Court of Appeal held that the provisional legislature was a validly created body. The issue was the maintenance of pending proceedings: could criminal cases part-heard in June before the High Court be properly resumed in July 1997 before the same judge in the Court of First Instance? The answer depended on whether the common law under which the charge was laid, the indictment, the rights and duties of the parties, and the jurisdiction of the newly-created court had all been maintained across the constitutional divide. The Basic Law was silent on the matter of pending proceedings, and the argument depended on general provisions. The judges seemed anxious to preserve continuity of the criminal justice system at all costs, eventually

relying for the jurisdiction of the court on vague pronouncements in the Basic Law which, in other circumstances, would never have been thought sufficient to cover the matter.

They went on to consider whether the Hong Kong Reunification Ordinance, passed on 1 July by the provisional legislature and which, unlike the Basic Law, did give explicit attention to the maintenance of pending proceedings, was a valid law, meaning passed by a legitimately-created legislative body. Here they resorted to Dicey and the concept of sovereignty. Prior to 1997 the jurisdiction of the Hong Kong courts was restricted by the sovereignty of Parliament; SAR courts were restricted by the supreme power of the National People's Congress, which decreed or approved of the establishment of the Provisional Legislative Council. That was it. A 'self-evident proposition', said one of the judges. Having relied on a mere implication of the Basic Law to maintain the jurisdiction of the criminal courts, they then dispensed with the Basic Law altogether - for their reasoning required that the existence of the Basic Law, along with its rules about amendment, was no impediment to the NPC doing whatever it liked in relation to the Special Administrative Region. This was to contradict the essential nature of the new legal order and to defy the promises it embodied for a high degree of autonomy and 'one country, two systems' for Hong Kong. Curiously, while thus applying Dicey in one respect, they risked ignoring his other great principle, the rule of law - for the NPC was not bound by the law it had itself created and which we had been assured would provide a formal barrier between Hong Kong and the mainland. The Solicitor General opined that the *casê* was a victory for the rule of law for it ensured that whatever was done was legal - a view of the rule of law which utterly and dismayingly denies its function as a constitutional principle.

My notes indicate that I intended at this point to quote J.P. Curran's remark, though I don't recall whether I did so in fact: 'I know that error is in its nature flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and argument and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion.' This may not be entirely appropriate to describe the judges' reasoning, but it is not far off, for the Court of Appeal simply disregarded the effect of the Basic Law as a constitutional instrument. They applied one article of it as they might an ordinary statutory provision, drawing a conclusion which contradicted the essential function of a codified constitution. Relying on an outdated concept of sovereignty from the colonial era they gave the NPA unlimited power over the SAR, just as Parliament had had over the colony. This was carrying continuity to absurd lengths. It strikingly exhibited an inability to understand the new constitutional arrangements, an inability which was almost guaranteed by the legal profession's failure to appreciate that Hong Kong had been granted a constitutional order fundamentally different from the one that had gone before.

The common law is in essence a pragmatic system: its propositions are worked out in the practical process of settling disputes in court. Lawyers

are not legal theorists, and lawyers in Hong Kong are generally unfamiliar with the techniques of public law. Judges were educated when Dicey's propositions were accepted almost as gospel, and they have not yet adjusted to the presuppositions implicit in the post-colonial regime. In time they may do so: the Chief Judge of the High Court has already admitted that his reasoning in the second case may have been defective. A change of attitude can only come with deep study of the Basic Law and an appreciation that a change of attitude is necessary: formally required by the return to Chinese rule under a codified constitution, and politically desirable if Hong Kong's way of life is to be maintained. Our lawyers - academics, practitioners, and judges - have so far served the community poorly, and Basic Law jurisprudence is as yet reedy and impoverished. The great challenge for the legal profession is to make the Basic Law work as a set of guarantees for the Hong Kong community, preserving what is of value from the past while permitting social developments in accordance with the wishes of Hong Kong people.

Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma: A Chinese Legacy

by

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Guangdong cancer. In my idealistic and impressionable youth, when I returned to Hong Kong some 27 years ago, I was ready to take on the world and planned to solve some substantive problems to the benefit of mankind. It did not take long for me to find such a problem, because I landed in the part of the world where NPC is one of the most common cancers. It has such a strong ethnic bias that it is a very common cancer among Chinese, especially Southern Chinese and this is why it is also called Guangdong Cancer. The cancer is moderately common among Greenland Eskimos, Northern Africans and Malays, but it is rare among Caucasians and other ethnic groups.

Treatment. The cancer originates from a recess between the nose and pharynx and then spreads to adjacent tissues causing nose bleeding, affecting hearing and nerves controlling the eyes or facial muscles and etc. Or the cancer cells can get into cervical lymphnodes and from there to other parts of the body. The cancer is quite sensitive to treatment by radiation or chemotherapeutic agents. Therefore it can be successfully treated so long as it is at its early stages. But prognosis worsens, if treatment is delayed. Then a combination of radiation and chemotherapeutic agents is used, but the disease may persist or may recur, often within 2 to 3 years after the treatment.

Serological diagnosis. Successful treatment therefore depends on early diagnosis. This is not so easy, however, because early symptoms are usually minimal and innocuous, and to do so would require a heightened state of awareness on the part of the patients themselves and their attending clinicians also. In collaboration with one of my mentor, Prof. H.C. Ho, widely recognized as the doyen of NPC, we developed a blood test in the late 70's. It is used to support clinical suspicion of the cancer and provide objective indications for further investigation by biopsy to confirm the diagnosis of the cancer. Such test was not available commercially until only recently, because the cancer is not common in the West and hence there is no profit incentive for diagnostic companies to develop the test. So we took on the job soon after and began to supply the test for use in Hong Kong, and we still continue to do so to-day. In the mean time and recognizing shortcomings of the test, we develop a second generation of a variety of tests, which are now replacing the old test. The test is based on an outstanding feature that these patients sustain high level and a large variety of serum antibodies against a human herpesvirus, called Epstein-Barr Virus. Over the years, the test was refined and newer and better tests were developed. Using a combination of these tests, nearly every NPC patients whether before or after

treatment gave a positive result by all these tests. This is in sharp contrast to healthy subjects, who rarely give a positive test result. Few may give a positive result by one test, but rarely by another test also. Based on these, the normal routine is to do 2 tests in tandem, one to screen and the other to confirm.

Second generation of tests for NPC screening. The tests are also put to another use. That is to screen healthy subjects for occult NPC. This is widely done nowadays in China and Taiwan. The practice of population screening is based on findings of several large studies showing that a positive test result is associated with an almost 100 fold risk of the cancer, and if followed up properly, it is possible to effect early diagnosis of the cancer. In Hong Kong, this is done on a more selective basis, because it is just too costly to follow up on high-risk individuals. Since about 1 out of 250 of these subjects is expected to develop the cancer per year, it is also unfair to place the psychological burden on the large majority of healthy subjects, who are not likely to develop the cancer. This was one of the major reason for us to develop a second generation of tests, and by using these tests in tandem, we can further improve prediction of the cancer to make the economics and the psychology of NPC screening more affordable. After we finished development on the second generation of tests, we could not supply the tests for general use, because we do not have the manufacturing expertise or facilities. In order to do so, we began to turn to manufacturers for help. This took us to new waters that we never ventured before. What appeared to be a simple solution initially took us more time than the research we put in to develop the test. Eventually, the first of a new breed of tests became commercially available 3 years ago.

Third generation of tests for Overseas Chinese. This year we expect a third generation of such products to be available also. These are the so-called points of care tests, as opposed to the second generation of large throughput tests. The major reason for us to go into this development is that we want to make NPC testing available to overseas Chinese, who live in areas where NPC is rare and hence clinicians there are not as alert to the cancer as ours here. But, they are at as high a risk of the cancer as we are here, because of their ethnic origin.

Aims of immune intervention. Having gone through 3 generations of tests for NPC, I asked myself if I had attained my youthful aspiration 27 years ago of solving the NPC problem. The answer is a resounding no, because patients are still presenting with advanced diseases associating with poor prognosis and high-risk subjects still have to wait for the disease to happen. Therefore, we went back to our drawing boards 3 years ago and started to develop immune intervention of advanced NPC and modern vaccines for high-risk subjects.

T cell immunity, a major host defense against tumors. From experimental animal studies, we know that T cells are the major host defense against tumors. One type of T cells, i.e. a / b T cells, recognize tumor cells

by the antigens, or more specifically small peptides, called T cell epitopes. Derived by digestion of the native antigen by a group of proteolytic enzymes located to certain organelle called proteosomes. T cell epitopes are then bound to major histocompatibility antigens, which are similar to those which determine a person's blood type. The epitope-MHC complex are then transported by ATP (antigen transporting protein) and become lodged on the surface of tumor cells. These are recognized and bound by T cells and this, in turn, stimulates T cells to multiply. Some of the progenies later will differentiate into killer cytotoxic T cells and other into long living memory T cells. Killing of tumor cells are effected by CTL, again via the same epitope-MHC complexes on the cell surface. One approach to immune intervention of tumors, therefore, is to expand the population of CTL *ex vivo* and then returned them to the patients to effect control of their cancer. This procedure is called adoptive immune therapy, because in addition to killing of tumors, some of the infused T cells are adopted and they persist as long live memory cells in the recipient for a long time and thereby sustain immunity of the recipient at a high level in much the same way as conventional vaccination.

EBV as target of intervention of NPC. Since NPC cells harbor EBV and express certain viral antigen, immune therapy for NPC can be achieved by adoptive transfer of CTL that recognize EBV antigens. The concept that immune therapy directing against EBV target can in fact effect control of tumors is supported by studies of a rare kind of lymphoma which often develops following bone marrow transplantation. As NPC, these tumors also harbor EBV and express a larger variety of EBV antigens. The tumors are in fact due to the growth of a small number of lymphocytes in our body, which carry the virus. These infected lymphocytes do not normally grow to become tumors, because our immune system keeps them at bay, and the reason that they develop into tumors in BMT patients because their immune system has been severely compromised. In one center, about 15% of patients develop this form of cancer within 12 months after BMT. Of the 50 patients infused with EBV CTL, by contrast, none developed the disease. The remarkable effect in prevention of the tumor is because the treatment has made good the patients' T cells deficit. Using gene marked CTL, it was further shown that the infused cells indeed persisted in the patients for a long time. The treatment is also somewhat effective against fulminating lymphomas, 2 of 3 such patients so treated recovered, but one of them developed inflammatory complications that required immune suppressive treatment. These results suggest that immune therapy is more effective in preventing tumor or at a stage when tumor burden is smaller than in treatment of full blown disease.

Adoptive transfer of EBV specific CTL. In contrast to BMT patients, the first phase of our studies showed that NPC patients, including those with advanced diseases, have relatively intact immune response against EBV. Level of EBV CTL varies, some may be so low that they cannot effectively control infection by the virus. Even in these patients, it was possible to

recover enough memory EBV T cells and expand them ex-vivo to a sufficiently large number required for treatment. Thus, the first phase of our studies was to infuse CTL derived from the patients themselves back to the same patients. This was proved to be a safe procedure. They can be infused with up to 10^9 CTL without any side effects. The number infused comprises up to 1/4 of all circulating lymphocyte in a human subject. In fact the treatment had effected some symptomatic improvements in these patients. It was further noted that the treatment served to booster the immune responses of every patient so treated, and in one patient whose base line immune response was so low that it affected his control of EBV infection, the treatment was found to reconstitute his immunity and enable him to control the virus infection again. Another remarkable feature was that all patients developed a heightened state of immune response and sustained it at that level for at least 6 months. This suggests that at least some of the infused cells have acquired longevity by entering into memory T cells pool. It is also possible that the infused cells may have recruited more memory cells and it is these 2 factors combined that have served to reconstitute patients' immune responses and sustained it at a higher level for prolonged period of time. But the treatment did not significantly improve tumor control. This may be explained partly by the fact that all patients were presented with advance diseases, which did not respond to further conventional treatment. The infused CTL comprise a variety of T cells of distinct EBV specificity. Compared with those from control subjects, those from NPC patients lacks in CTL specific for 2 antigens. These are LMP1 and LMP2, which are also the major viral antigens presented by the tumor cells. It was considered therefore that this deficit may be the main reason for failure of the treatment to improve tumor control. Two methods have been developed to overcome this difficulty. One is to infuse CTL from an HLA matched relative. The other is to improve method for expanding CTL from patients with the appropriate antigenic specificity. We are also developing a method for expanding a certain sub-class T cells, called gamma delta T cells, which recognize tumor and kill cells by "distress signals" they present on their surface to supplement EBV specific CTL and improve the effect of adoptive immune therapy for NPC.

DNA tumor vaccines. DNA tumor vaccines are intended for subjects who are at high risk of NPC to prevent cancer or to eradicate occult tumors. Construction of these modern vaccines is akin to ballistic missiles. It consists of candidate vaccine genes fused to an adjuvant gene. Vaccine genes may be those which encode major antigens presented by tumor cells. Alternatively, it may be constructed by stringing together a number of nucleotide sequences encoding specific T cell targets presented by tumor cells. The adjuvant genes are those, which encode molecules that bind to professional antigen presenting cells and thus serve as a sensor to ensure that vaccines are directed to these cells to improve vaccine efficacy. The chimeric genes can be inserted into a virus to produce a live attenuated vaccine. Here, the virus acts as a vehicle for delivery of the vaccine. Alternatively, the chimeric vaccine gene is first inserted into a plasmid, which is in turn

introduced into a bacteria to produce an oral vaccine. We have constructed several live attenuated and oral vaccines, and confirmed their efficacy in animal models.

Prospects of immune intervention of NPC. I have outlined different approaches to immune intervention of NPC. With further improvements as described, I believe that adoptive immune transfer of EBV CTL of appropriate specificity can provide an additional treatment option for this cancer. In the light of experiences gained from EBV related lymphoma, this procedure is most likely to be useful to eradicate residual tumors left behind after bulk tumor has been removed by conventional treatment. Such adoptive immune transfer is suited for advanced NPC and is expected to improve prognosis of the disease. NPC vaccines are primarily intended for subjects who have been tested positive for serum IgA EBV antibodies and hence are at a high risk of having NPC or already are having occult disease. The use of vaccines in these subjects is expected to reduce their risk of developing the disease.

Future research. Successful immune intervention of NPC will pave the way for extending similar approach to other virus related cancers, of which, hepatocellular carcinoma related to hepatitis B virus is of the foremost importance in China and Southeast Asia. Under a collaborative research agreement with Xiemen University, we are now working on the development of DNA vaccines for use in hepatitis B virus carriers, who sustain a high risk of having hepatocellular carcinoma. We are also working on developing adoptive immune therapy for treatment of the cancer.

College Seminar Abstracts

by

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1995-1999*

Africa : Rethinking a Way Forward

by

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A lot has been written on and said about Africa. The debate as to who is responsible for Africa's underdevelopment is unending. The Afro-centric scholars and sympathizers tend to over-glorify the inherent potential for development of the African states and blame the former colonial masters and former 'cold warriors' for having deprived them; whilst the Euro-centric scholars and statesmen downplay the ability of Africa to develop. This is because Africa at a point in history became a 'no man's land' where the East and West flexed their muscles to show who is who in a bid to extend their influence in the land of Africa. Today, the gains they were fighting for are no longer worth fighting for. The colonialists have milked enough to strengthen their economies and the cold war is over. The prodigal African land has gone back to her weak children - her resources have been milked away. Her children now are at a juncture with arms stretched begging for arms. But every cent received from her former colonial masters has strings attached to it. The African leaders, who ruled their countries after independence, felt that gaining independence and wearing the shoes of their former colonial masters would end the problem. They failed to address the real problems of their countries. They never took the challenge of development as has happened in Asia. My position is that of a 'middle roader' in search of a solution to Africa's problems of development. The potential and the resources are still there as ever before. This short talk will take the following format:

- a. Introducing Africa
- b. Development in Africa before the intervention of Europeans
- c. Colonial rule
- d. Why has it been difficult for the continent to take off since independence?
- e. Rethinking the way forward.

Can Adult Humans with Central Nervous System Damage Have Hope of Recovery Someday?

by

Dr. You Si Wei

Department of Anatomy

Damage to the central nervous system (CNS) due to injury or degenerative diseases in adult mammals including humans results in loss of neurons and degeneration of nerve fibers with a severe loss of neurological functions. This is because no new neurons are produced in the mature brain and the damaged fibers in the CNS cannot regenerate. Neural tissue transplantation techniques have been developed recently to try to overcome these problems. Thus, peripheral nerve grafts have been transplanted into various parts of the brain and spinal cord to promote regeneration of damaged axons. In addition, fetal brain tissue transplant has been undertaken to replace lost neurons in the brain.

Utilization of Sweet Potato in Composite Flours

by

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Roots, tubers and plantain play a vital role in food security in developing countries. Sweet potato (*Ipomea batatas*) originated in the Yucatan Peninsula of Latin America is considered to be the most widely dispersed rootcrop. It grows under many different ecological conditions. It has a shorter growth period than many other crops and shows no marked seasonality (Oke, 1990). Total world production in 1988 was 125 million tons, of which 108 million tons was produced in China. However, in recent years, there has been a marked drop in its production in about half of its major producing countries. This has been attributed to growth in urbanization and to demand for a more diversified diet based on cereal grains (Scott, 1992). The changing food consumption patterns have forced many food-deficit countries to import large quantities of grain to meet local demand. There is now a renewed effort to broaden the food base in developing countries by creating new food products or improving traditional staple food products based on indigenous raw materials such as sweet potato. Development of low-cost convenience food products may stimulate consumption of and demand for this crop (De Ruiter, 1975; Wheatley and Brekelbaum, 1992). In particular, China is the world's largest producer and consumer of wheat, and much attention has recently been focused on the escalating Chinese demand for wheat imports (Wehnfritz, 1994; Corke, 1995). Use of abundant supplies of sweet potato in China to partially substitute for wheat in high-quality products would help to reduce dependence on expensive grain imports. Researchers have tried to use wheat-sweet potato composite flour in the production of several types of product: Arabic bread (Balady) (Hamed et al. 1973), doughnuts (Collins and Aziz, 1982), chiffon cakes, cupcakes, cookies, bread (Amante, 1993) and noodles (Van Den, 1992). The effect of endogenous amylase activity on the physico-chemical properties of sweet potato flour and wheat-sweet potato composite flours is presented. Utilization of wheat-sweet potato composite flours for alkali and salted noodles is discussed.

Industrial Wastewater Management in Hong Kong

by

Ms. Yee Lai Wan

Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management

The Hong Kong government's changing policy to solve Hong Kong's environmental problems will be outlined. The study examines the approach adopted in industrial wastewater management in Hong Kong, specifically sewage. It assesses the present industrial wastewater policy which is covered by both the legislation on water pollution control and the sewage services charge. Using a case study of the bleaching and dyeing industry, the surcharge scheme adopted is evaluated with respect to what economic theory suggests would be an efficient charging scheme.

The Sun, Melanoma and Skin Cancer

by

Mr. Fang Dong

Department of Anatomy

A remarkable increase in malignant cancers of the skin was reported all over the world recently. Solar radiation (UV light) is a well documented risk factor in melanoma and non melanocytic skin cancer (i.e. basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma). More than 90% of melanoma are localized in areas of skin exposed to sunlight. A decrease in ozone layer in the stratosphere induces an increase in the amount of UV radiation in sunlight. Even a small increase in UV-B radiation will almost certainly affect human health. Skin DNA is the target of UV and defective in the repair of UV damage to DNA resulting in melanoma or other cancers. The total number of melanocytic nevi in whole-body is the most important factor to estimate the risk of melanoma. A change of life habit, e.g. sunbathing, sun blocks and clothing, is strongly suggested to protect our skin from the hazards of sunlight.

Tobacco: The Leading Cause of Death

by

Dr. Prodip K. Bose
The School of Medicine

Global tobacco-related mortality will rise from the current 2.5 million rapidly. Most of the increase will occur in developing countries, where legislative controls and other measures that succeed in limiting the use of tobacco in industrialized countries do not exist or are at best inadequate. More than 400,000 persons die in the United States each year from tobacco-related causes. Most of the reviews identify tobacco as the cause of the substantial number of mortality and morbidity cases. Tobacco also has adverse effects on the cardiovascular system, the respiratory systems, the fetus and newborn. Most recent researches suggest that the effects may extend to other areas, including effect of cigarette smoking on breast milk production, effect of exposure to passive smoking on children's intelligence and behavior, and on developing lung cancer in an adult. The components most likely to contribute to the health hazards of smoking are carbon monoxide, nicotine, and 'tar'. Nicotine is a psychoactive agent whose continual use usually leads to addiction. The pharmacological and behavioral processes are similar to those of other addictive drugs. Cigarette smoke contains over 4000 substances. Basic constituents are organic matter, nicotine alkaloids, additives, and pyrolysis products (CO_2 , CO, and 'tar'). Carcinogens and radioactive substances are found within 'tar' that are proven very dangerous to health. Aldehydes, phenol, ammonia, and sulfur dioxide are surface irritants in cigarette smoke that cause some of its uncomfortable effects such as eye and nasal mucosa irritation. As smoking gradually decreases in developed countries, the tobacco epidemic is overtaking in developing countries. Primary prevention is the most effective strategy to decrease the prevalence of smoking. Those who never smoke never become addicted to nicotine and never have to quit. Secondary prevention must also be emphasized, because children whose parents smoke are exposed to health risks and are themselves more likely to smoke in the future. Parental health can be improved by smoking cessation. To accomplish the goals of primary and secondary prevention, the aggressive public health strategy directed at both parents and children should be expanded.

Feeling Close and Feeling Indebted: Relationship Effects on Indebtedness

by

Mr. Li Feng

Department of Psychology

Indebtedness is defined as a conscious state of owing another person a favor. Previous studies indicate that the magnitude of indebtedness is in part determined by the recipient's benefits, the donor's costs, the perception of helping intentions, and the recipient-donor relationship. My research looks further into the influences of these factors on indebtedness and suggests some preliminary answers to the following questions:

1. Does the more benefits and costs mean the more indebtedness?
2. Are the effects of benefits and costs dependent upon how close two persons feel about each other?
3. What if two persons have different ideas about how much they are indebted to each other?
4. Do close and less close friends see their helping intentions differently?
5. Are there implications for winning friends?

Urban Conservation and Development: Sustaining the Spirit of Place

by

Mr. Senen Antonio
Department of Architecture

In the course of urban development, social economic, political, and technological changes demand new forms or functions from the city fabric, which in turn has to adapt to these new needs. Population growth and movement, transportation and infrastructure needs, expectations for a higher standard of life, and other factors bear upon the quality of the urban environment, often with unsatisfactory results. Urban conservation then gains its worth in providing a means of guiding the growth of cities by introducing humanist qualities to development. Urban conservation is defined as "the management of the built environment and architectural heritage, which aims to restrain the rate of change in the urban system towards achieving a better balance between conservation and development than would otherwise prevail." (Lichfield, 1988: 9). Many twentieth century cities have begun to reassess the validity of their urban development frameworks. No longer having the luxury of evolving slowly over time, they are realizing the importance of achieving a balance between meeting their developmental needs and maintaining their individual urban character.

The Role of Image Bank in the Act of Design

by

Mr. Quazi Mohd Mahtab-uz-Zaman

Department of Architecture

Past places of interest and significant events which provoke our mind immediately become part of our memory and gradually take the form of the image bank of critical source material. These critical sources are the impulse by which designers (architects, urban designers etc.) symbolise their subjective intention, significance, emotion and spirit through the objective creation. This creation finally produces urban language (structure, space etc.) where people can identify and orientate themselves in the overall urban context with the help of urban texts: landmark, districts, pathways, edges and thus produces a legible city form. Drawing from the case study of Francis Downing, a theoretical framework can be established with the understanding that the place and imagery are likely to have a powerful impact on the design process. The case study findings indicate that the design process of the design students differs from that of the practitioners where the students incline more towards abstract ideas and innovations and gradually shift towards more simple solutions as they face practical urban conditions in their profession.

Moreover, it is evident through empirical studies that naive replication and unconscious repetition are functions of apathy of the designers towards extracting and conceiving images of significant surrounding places. The study of image making process between two groups of designers (students and practitioners) suggests that greater contextualisation of place and imagery is necessary to stimulate the image bank of designers and thus to produce an urban language of interest where memory reverberates.

The Law of Insider Dealing in Hong Kong

by

Mr. Terman K.N. Wong

Department of Law

The activities of Insider Dealing in securities trading have long been blamed for producing unfairness and are harmful to a free trading security market. This seminar would introduce the relevant legal sanctions currently in force in Hong Kong and evaluate their effectiveness in curbing these activities. The following will be introduced:

1. The situation before the Securities (Insider Dealing) Ordinance.
2. The definition of insider dealing.
3. The connected person and the secondary insider.
4. Price sensitive information.
5. Inquiry and enforcement system.
6. The only one case of insider dealing in 1994.
7. The punishment.
8. Other possible civil liability for a company director.
9. The defects.
10. Argument for the system.

Qigong: An Invitation to Take a Break from Intellection and Discover Intuition

by

Dr. Allen Dorcas

Department of Psychology

In our pursuit for knowledge and deeper intellectual understanding of the 'mysteries' of life, we have placed an increasing emphasis on developing the intellect. This is undoubtedly reflected in our educational system. This almost exclusive trust in the intellect has led to a mistrust of other modes of apprehending reality, namely more intuitive modes. The intellect is composed of abstract symbols that are used to represent an observed reality. We must learn not to take the symbol for that reality. The word is not the thing it is meant to represent. Qigong is a method developed in China to go beyond the word and unleash the energy that lies beyond. In Qigong terminology, this means quieting the activities of shi shen (識神) and activating yuan shen (元神). This is achieved through the process of turning the mind or tiao xin (調心) which is central to all Qigong exercises.

The Importance of A “Minor” Poet : Yao He (姚合)

by

Ms. Kennis L.M. Wong

Department of Chinese

The importance of a “minor poet”? This seems to be a contradictory title, but it really can describe the situation of YH, a poet in the middle Tang Dynasty. The influence of YH on the poets of Tang and even Sung dynasties shows his importance clearly in the Chinese poetry. Nevertheless, he is almost totally neglected by us in our time. It is hard to find his name and details in the history of classical Chinese poetry nowadays. Besides the responsibility of the literary historians, it can be said that whether the effort of a poet can be recognized by the poetic history or not mainly depends on the poet's luck. However, instead of being under the arbitrary nature of luck, it is more convincing that, for the sake of academic ideal, we need to continue the process of extending the aesthetic dimensions to a new milestone as a responsibility of the time. Then, a lot of these “minor” poets will get back their positions in the Chinese poetry, and we can have a clearer picture of our poetry too.

Open Storage: The Ravaging of Our Countryside

by

Ms. Ann Shuk Han Mak

Department of Geography and Geology

In the last decade there have been dramatic changes in the rural landscape of the New Territories. One of the most evident changes is the frenetic conversion of fallow fields into open storage. Open storage refers to the practice of landowners who sublet their land for the storage of containers, construction materials, scraps and wrecked cars. The materials are often found on filled agricultural lands, in drained fish ponds or along highways. They are not unwanted materials but are too space-consuming to be accommodated in conventional warehouses. Each year a huge area of agricultural land is engulfed by these open storage uses. The haphazard and uncontrolled manner of these activities has destroyed both the former beauty of the landscape and impinged on areas of ecological importance. Since the demand for storage space is an inevitable consequence of the economic activities of Hong Kong, the problem will continue. To resolve this, the materials can be accommodated in designated areas where better storage facilities and infrastructures are provided. The seminar to-night will discuss some of the problems caused by open storage, the historical and intermediate factors that have allowed it to arise, and some of the responses the government will consider to mitigate the problems.

Standardized Patient and Medical Teaching Reform In China

by

Dr. Xie Tao

Department of Psychiatry and Neurology

How can you imagine that a normal person was trained to be a patient with many kinds of diseases, even with mental disorders? This is true in China. These so called “standardized patients” play a very important role in the training and evaluation of clinical skill, especially the interview and performance qualification. They can simulate almost every disease ranging from baby diarrhea to schizophrenia, and every symptom and sign, including the most difficult ones, such as hypertension, hyperreflexia and vessel bruits, and they have already been used not only for examination purposes but also for demonstration and practice. They have been positively accepted in many medical schools in China, and found particularly helpful in the demonstration of physical examination in gynaecology and mental status examination in psychiatry. They are versatile actors/actresses, professional patients, experienced teachers and objective examiners.

Biped - Two - Legged Walking Robot

by

Mr. Terence C.F. Wong

Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

To make a robot functionally equivalent to a human is one of the scientists' dreams; however, the motion of living organisms by means of legs, especially the locomotion of bipeds, has always been a challenging problem to scientists of different disciplines, i.e. biologists, physiologists, medical specialists, mathematicians and engineers. The development of an algorithm of human locomotor control requires approaches from control engineering and robotics. Natural walking of human beings is a kind of dynamic biped locomotion executed in an inverted pendulum manner. Scientists expect that robots will operate in indoor spaces designed for ordinary human use. A biped locomotion robot is best suited for movement in the same spaces where human beings live and work, such as houses and factories. Nonetheless, biped locomotion is essentially unstable, and its control becomes very difficult from the standpoint of stability. In the presentation, the background information and the latest development of biped locomotion will be given. My recent research result on the stabilization of biped dynamic walking using gyroscopic couple will also be presented.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms

by

Dr. Wong Chun Hung

Department of Mechanical Engineering

Compiled by Luo Guan Zhong in the Ming Dynasty, and revised by Mao Zong Gang and his father in the Qing Dynasty, the Romance of the Three Kingdoms has been written for six centuries and it still remains one of the greatest Chinese literary masterpieces and popular classical novels. It is a vast collection of the best known and best loved tales, both historical and legendary, passed on from generation to generation by story-tellers, through popular plays and operas, and in writing. Set in the turbulent Three Kingdoms Period, the novel relates the clever political maneuvers and brilliant battle strategies used by the ambitious rulers as they fought one another for supremacy. The events of the story provide lessons in warfare, politics, and human psychology which are valuable even in the modern society.

Internet and Netscape

by

Mr. Chen Guihai

Department of Computer Science

The Internet has reached governments, businesses, schools, and homes worldwide. The Internet is reaching ships at sea, planes in the air, and mobile vehicles on land. The Internet is becoming an indispensable part of our daily life. The Internet is revolutionizing the way we work and play. To face the impact of the internet, one might ask, "What should I do?" The answer is "to know it and learn how to use it." The objective of this seminar is thus aimed at wiping out the Internet illiteracy and helping you to understand the Internet better. The seminar is organized as follows: After the introduction in Section 1, Section 2 answers the question "What is the Internet?" in the broad sense. It reviews the history of the Internet and its incredible growth. Section 3 explains basic Internet concepts and technology, and examines how Internet hardware is organized and how Internet software provides communication. After knowing how and why the Internet works well, Section 4 goes on to describe services currently available on the Internet such as e-mail, ftp, telnet, gopher, archie and netscape. Section 5 foresees the future of the Internet.

The Behaviour of Hong Kong's Dolphins And Porpoises

by

Mr.E.C.M. Parsons

Guest Speaker from the Swire Institute of Marine Science

Hong Kong has records for 16 species of cetaceans. Of these two species are present as resident populations: the finless porpoise (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*) and the Indo-Pacific hump-backed dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*; known locally as the Chinese white dolphin or pink dolphin). Local research has covered various aspects of the biology of these animals and in this presentation I will discuss one of these aspects, namely the behavior of the dolphins.

A series of surveys were carried out between 1994 and 1995, from a series of land vantage points overlooking areas of high dolphin abundance. The results of these surveys led to the conclusions that: there are distinct peaks in hump-backed dolphin abundance and these are linked to the onset of the summer monsoon season. There is an increase in abundance of hump-backed dolphins during the summer in South Lantau waters. Whereas finless porpoises are more abundant off South Lantau during the winter months, during the summer they are seen to the south of Hong Kong island. These changes in abundance are correlated with changes in salinity and water temperature. The abundance of finless porpoises off South Lantau is also linked to their calving season.

The number of dolphin deaths reported in Hong Kong is high considering the estimated population size. Moreover the mortality rate of both the dolphins and porpoises appears to be increasing. The high levels of pollution in Hong Kong's waters is a likely contributor to this high death rate. Without a comprehensive strategy for the conservation of Hong Kong's dolphins and porpoises, and without the co-operation of China, the future for Hong Kong's dolphins will be bleak.

Perception vs. Reality: A “Fat-Free” America

by

Messrs. Kathy Johnson, Jason Strofs and David Bench

Department of Business

Living in the United States, we have constantly heard the message to reduce the amount of fat we eat. Many people outside the United States probably do not understand the obsession Americans have with fat, but any visitor to the U.S. would be quite astonished at the abundance of low fat and fat free products that can be found in any American supermarket. On average, more than 1,000 new lower-fat and fat-free products have been introduced annually since 1990. Many of these products are the result of the innovative use of both common and more recently developed food ingredients that replicate specific attributes of fat. The medical community suggests that to help reduce risk for chronic disease such as coronary heart disease and some types of cancer, we should consume less than 30 percent of calories from fat with no more than one-third of fat calories coming from saturated fat. Americans may have moved closer to meeting this goal. Average fat intake is estimated at approximately 34 percent of calories, down from approximately 36 percent in 1980. Saturated fat intake is estimated at approximately 12 percent, down from 13 percent of calories.

A closer look at these data, however, suggests that the news is not so positive. Absolute fat intake has increased from 81 to 83 grams per day. Total calorie intake has increased at an even faster pace, from 1,989 to 2,153 calories per day, an increase of over 8 percent. Based on this data, the reported drop in percent of calories from fat appears to be the result of a higher intake of calories rather than a reduction in absolute fat intake. Reducing the percent of calories from fat by increasing calorie intake is not generally recommended due to the link between excess calories and obesity, another risk factor for chronic disease. We feel that we can share our experiences with you on this matter, provide information regarding the latest wave of fat free products, and give you insight from the perspective of those who grew up in a country with a reputation for unhealthy food, but with such a variety and accessibility of healthy products.

Conserving a World Heritage Site

by

Mr. Athula Amarasekera
Department of Architecture

This presentation will introduce the concept of 'World Heritage' in preserving the greatest physical creations of mankind. Currently, there are well over 400 sites in the 7 continents listed as World Heritage Sites. Some of the better known 'World Heritage Sites' in the region include the Great Wall of China, Site of Discovery of Peking Man, Taj Mahal etc. The principles in selecting a site for 'World Heritage' and listing by the United Nations will be introduced briefly. The second part of the presentation will briefly introduce scientific methodology in conserving and preserving for posterity such heritage. This will be done with reference to the on going UNESCO-Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Project for the Conservation of the Abhayagiri Vihara - the largest monastery created by mankind of over 600 acres - in the World Heritage City of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. This campaign is currently the principal campaign for the world in Cultural Conservation of the United Nations. The two previous campaigns of the United Nations in this regard have been the saving of Abu Simbal Temple in Egypt on building the Aswan Dam in the Nile and the saving of the Borobudhur Temple in Indonesia.

The Emerging Fungal Infection

by

Dr. Chen Daliang

Department of Microbiology

There are about 100,000 species of fungi that have been documented. It is estimated that there are still as many waiting to be discovered. Fortunately, only about 150 known species are found to be pathogens of human beings and animals. Most of the fungal infections such as ringworm and Hong Kong foot are common skin diseases and not life-threatening. Nevertheless, these fungal infections can cause agonizing itching and cosmetic imperfection. By improving the sanitary conditions, the chances of getting these common fungal infections can be significantly lowered. However, this is not the end of the story about fungal infections. According to a report from Prof. Richard Wenzel of University of Virginia in 1988, nearly 40% of all deaths caused by hospital-acquired infections were due to fungi rather than bacteria or viruses. In fact, the morbidity and mortality rates of deep fungal infections in immunocompromised patients have doubled or even tripled over the past two decades. *Candida* species and *Aspergillus* species account for 80% of all the nosocomial fungal infections; most of which can result in deaths unless laboratory diagnoses are made and anti-fungal drugs are administered at the early stages. Unfortunately, the technology for early diagnoses of the two main agents still leaves much to be desired. In this presentation, our recent experimental results toward solving this problem are reported.

A Meteorological Hazard on 8, May, 1992: Its Reasons and Impacts

by

Mr. Norman K.W. Cheung
Department of Geography and Geology

A heavy rainstorm on 8, May, 1992 between 0600-0700 generated the all time high record for "Maximum Hourly Rainfall" (109.9 millimeters) since observations began in 1884. Its high intensity can also rank it with the top ten heavy rainstorms on a 2-hour, 3-hour and 4-hour basis. The daily rainfall of 324.1 mm is higher than the total for the entire month of May (316.7 mm) and makes it the second wettest May day on record. The 8 May, 1992 thunderstorms brought the total since 1 January to 1312.2 mm, the highest on record for such a period. That the divergence in the upper troposphere was the crucial condition for the formation of the rainstorm is discovered with the aid of satellite and radar pictures, upper air and surface circulation charts, tephigram and other meteorological data before, during and after the passage of the rainstorm. However, the failure to forecast the morning rainstorm and its resultant serious impacts on flooding and landslides shows that we have a need for a reappraisal of our forecasting and warning system, disaster preparedness and other operational measures. When there is no absolute method of deciding the probable maximum rainfall and its return period, the only alternative is to try to forecast the formation, persistence and dissipation of rainstorms in order to minimize their damage. The limitations encountered by the Royal Observatory in forecasting heavy rainstorm are discussed. The introduction of a new two-stage warning system, namely the Green-Amber-Red-Black colour coded alert system marks the third phase of the development of the warning system for natural hazards in Hong Kong. Without associated laws concerning the employment status, the effectiveness of this new warning system is suspect in practice. The general picture of the conventional system of disaster preparedness and operational measures taken in Hong Kong are also described.

Elixir of Life: The Omega-3 Fatty Acids

by

Ms. Rema Vazhappilly

Department of Botany

There really is no proven method to guarantee a longer life, but there are things we can do to help us live a healthier life and perhaps indirectly prolong life. It is known that fish oil is potentially beneficial in some cases for patients with cardiovascular disease because it slows the formation of blood clots and speeds their destruction. It reduces some aspects of the inflammatory response and inhibits vasoconstriction, a squeezing down of arteries which slows the blood circulation. The effective ingredients of fish oil in this respect are believed to be eicosapentaenoic (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acids (DHA), referred to as the omega-3 fatty acids in this presentation. In addition to coronary heart diseases, the omega-3 fatty acids can also help to prevent arteriosclerosis, cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and diseases of old age such as Alzheimer's disease and age related degeneration. Since human beings lack the desaturase enzyme system to synthesize these essential fatty acids, there is an increasing demand for omega-3 fatty acids to be used as a supplement in infant formulas and also as an adjuvant in drug therapy. At present fish oil is widely used for the commercial production of these fatty acids. As the commercial interest is increasing extensively, researchers are focusing on microalgal based technologies for the production of omega-3 fatty acids.

The Character Of Light

by

Dr. Chan Hau Cheung

Department of Civil and Structural Engineering

In our experience there is nothing mysterious about the concepts of particle and wave. If we drop a stone into a lake, we have no doubt that the ripples that spread out from the point of impact is a wave. We regard light as waves because under suitable circumstances it exhibits the properties of wave. Surprisingly, under other circumstances the waves behave as streams of particles. In this talk, I shall introduce this dual character of light together with other interesting characteristics of light such as the consistency of light speed for all observers and light is also affected by gravity. All these unusual characteristics of light are crucial to our understanding of the physical universe.

Computing Revolution And Physics Community

by

Mr. Zhu Jianxin

Department of Physics

This talk is devoted to the history of computer by summarizing each of five decades since the ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer). In the first decade the earliest computers were designed and built; in the second the modern computer era began; in the third there was a period of controlled growth; in the fourth hardware became diversified; in the fifth, computing and communications merged and advanced. For these fifty years, physicists have played a vital role in designing computers and developing computing tools. Meanwhile, only with these tools have physicists been able to solve the most sophisticated problems. This talk presents a sample of the contributions of physicists to computers and computing, and the contributions of computers and computing to physicists.

A Hidden Crisis to Humans: Toxic Chemicals

by

Mr. Charles Chi Wai Wong

Department of Chemistry

During the twentieth century, the continuous development of chemical technology has improved our standard and quality of living. Various useful chemical products have been produced as a result of invention and innovation in chemical industry in the 90s. However, the unintended results of their over enthusiastic and hasty use have brought about potential risks to human beings and the environment. The accumulating effect of insecticides, heavy metals poisoning, greenhouse effect and destruction of ozone layer, etc. are the adverse consequences of injudicious use of chemicals. All these have become threats to human life. The tragedy happened in Tokyo in March, 1995 - Sarin (沙林) gas attack was one of the examples showing the lethality of toxic chemicals. The incident of thallium (鉈) poisoning of a girl in China has also brought our attention to the risk of exposure to toxic substances. More related to us are the local crises arising from toxic chemicals such as the contamination of vegetables by the pesticide residues, Methamidophos (甲氨磷), the discovery of carcinogenic substances in some lipsticks and the excess arsenic (砷) content found in certain Chinese drug. They all arouse our great concern. The concept of toxicity, the chemical nature and toxic effects of the substances mentioned above, as well as other toxic chemicals which pose as a potential threat to us will be discussed.

Urban Development and Urban Trees Survival in Hong Kong

by

Ms. Christina Ching Yee Ho
Department of Geography & Geology

In the year 1841, Hong Kong Island was only a “barren island”, almost entirely grass with less than two thousand and five hundred residents in a few villages and hamlets. Kowloon, south of Boundary Street, was no more than a peninsula with barren hills and about three thousand people in fishing settlements and farming villages by 1861. When the city of Hong Kong was founded, European tradition of urban tree planting was introduced by the British. The limited transport needs then allowed widespread street planting while low living density permitted private gardens to plant trees. Hong Kong was a green city then. Ever since the late nineteenth century, Hong Kong Island and Kowloon have been developing and changing rapidly. Unfortunately, rapid urban development and population growth threatened the survival of urban trees. Urban renewal in the period 1964-1982 and since 1982 have intensified land use to accommodate the very rapid increase in population, hence leaving very few survival spaces and chances for urban trees that have managed to escape from the systematic clear-felling by the Japanese during Japanese occupation from 1940-45. In the last two decades the Hong Kong Government systematically plant trees so as to make Hong Kong a green city again.

The Sun and Its Nine Gems

by

Mr. Kelkar Avijit Shriniwas

Department of Chemistry

In 1979 NASA, the biggest organization dealing in space technology sent its yet another unmanned vehicle in search of our family members, who had been close to us for millions of years, and yet we knew so little of them. Although the two of the smaller brothers, Mercury and Venus, were left alone, the big brothers were to be discovered in depth, along with their sons, and daughters (their moons). The whole range of the planets from Mars to Uranus, were photographed, and their pictures were sent to earth. What had happened was that Voyager 1 could not photograph all the planets and their moons, as its path was not designed to go close enough to Uranus. So its successor, Voyager 2, was launched in 1980. Just as recently as 1993 it went past Uranus, and sent its last photographs, before it said good bye and left for the journey, from where it could never come back, and yet it will be sending the whereabouts of its itinerary, and the people (stars, planets, moons, meteorites) it meets and observes. This seminar is a part of the relentless photographs and information sent to us by the two voyagers, in an endeavor to find details of these magnificent celestial bodies, still unknown to us. So let us all fasten our seatbelts, and set off to the unknown world, and try to go as close as possible to these gigantic yet tiniest creations of the ever expanding and endless universe.

Dolly The Sheep

by

Mr. Chau Wai Kei

Department of Anatomy

In Edinburgh, Wilmut and his colleagues first reported on Nature (Vol. 385) in 1997 that viable offspring can be produced from adult mammalian cells. Their findings have profound significance in answering the biological question - do growth, differentiation and development of the embryo involve irreversible modifications to the genome (genetic material) in cells? Wilmut et al. have demonstrated that they do not. In the experiment, researchers firstly extracted DNA content from an immature, unfertilized egg of a Scottish Blackface ewe. Next they had frozen an adult or "donor" cell of a Finn Dorset ewe and took the nucleus out to provide all the genetic material for the forth-coming offspring. The final step was to fuse the nucleus with emptied egg by exposing them to an electric current. The fused cell grew into an early-stage embryo called a blastocyst which was implanted into the womb of the a foster mother (Blackface ewe). After a normal period of gestation, the mother successfully gave birth to the lamb which was then named Dolly. These Scottish findings not only stimulate work to adapt or modify technique to further the research in cell growth and development, but also arouse public outrage about implication of cloning of an individual i.e. the replication of a human individual by the taking of a cell with genetic material and the cultivation of the cell through the egg, embryo, fetal and newborn stages into a new human individual.

Waves in Victoria Harbor and Their Reduction

by

Dr. Zhu Shutang

Department of Mechanical Engineering

In the recent two decades, with the development of economy of Hong Kong, Victoria Harbor has become one of the busiest harbors in the world. More and more boats have been arriving or leaving the harbor. On the other hand, in order to meet the land requirements, a series of reclamation projects have been carried out. These reclamation projects resulted in vertical solid seawalls on coastal line. Waves generated by vessel movement propagate to and impinge on these seawalls, are almost completely reflected. These waves make Victoria Harbor a rough sea. Passage on small vessels has become less comfortable in certain parts of the harbor while the cargo handling, berthing and similar activities have become more difficult. There have also been suggestions that the confused sea state could lead to accidents. Public concern over marine safety in the harbor has been increasing. How to control and reduce these waves and make the harbor turn into a calm sea becomes an urgent problem. Through investigations into factors affecting wave conditions in the harbor, several solutions to this problem have been suggested. One of them is marine traffic control. Another is reconstruction of the vertical solid seawalls.

Noise and Hearing Protection

by

Mr. Zhang Qijun

Department of Mechanical Engineering

The increased population, urbanization, industrialization and technological change have brought us not only air and water pollution but also crescendo of noise, which is simply defined as unwanted sound. Sound pressure level (SPL) is usually used to tell the intensity of noise, which combines both the measures of amplitude and frequency of the sound. Prolonged exposure to intense noise can cause permanent hearing loss to human. Moreover, aside from considerations of health and human productivity, like polluted streams, smoke-filled air, noise degrades the quality of our lives and detracts us from the enjoyment of urban living. Unfortunately, people suffering from stress and emotional disturbances frequently do not realize that noise may be an important contributing factor. Why have we allowed our communities to become noisier? Are we as human beings unaware of the existence of noise as an environmental concern? To what extent is government involved in abating community noise and at what levels is it involved? What is the average noise level to which the population is normally exposed? How does this level vary according to day, time of day, and activity pattern? Which noise sources generate the greatest sound pressure levels? To what degree does the distance from a noise source affect noise intensity? This seminar addresses these questions.

Chemistry Today and Tomorrow

by

Mr. Liu Chunjing

Department of Chemistry

Chemistry is one of the oldest and the most productive sciences in improving human life. The chemical process industry is the largest segment of the manufacturing industries in modern societies. In China, for example, the chemical industry accounts for more than 30% of all manufacturing industries. This statistic does not include the output of related industries, such as electronics, automobile, or agriculture, that use the products of the chemical process industry. Much of the work done in designing and producing chemical products such as modern medicines is unknown to non-chemical professionals. As we are getting more and more concerned about the “toxic chemical” and “chemical pollution”, we tend to forget the absolutely central role that chemistry plays in human well-being. In this talk, I attempt to present a more balanced picture. The first part of this talk presents an overview of the practical contributions that chemistry has made, and will make in the future, to our civilization. The second part will elaborate a bit about how chemists make these contributions and my research work in porphyrin chemistry.

The Risk of Earthquakes in Hong kong

by

Mr. He Xiaogang

Department of Civil and Structural Engineering

An earthquake is literally the phenomenon that occurs when the ground vibrates. A severe, damaging earthquake is one of the most terrifying and devastating events that can be experienced. On 28 July 1976 at 3:42am, an earthquake of the magnitude of 7.8 occurred in Tangshan, over 160km from Beijing, in the northeastern part of China. According to official projection, in the Tangshan region (an area covering 110 square kilometers with Tangshan city as its center), the number of deaths resulting from the earthquake amounted to 242,419. Causes of earthquake are very complicated and have not been known completely so far. Damages by strong earthquakes are shown and how to measure an earthquake is introduced. Now, the fifth episode (an episode is the active period of strong earthquakes) in China in this century is coming. Where and when will the next strong earthquake occur? It is very difficult to answer. Prediction of earthquakes, especially for short-term and imminent prediction, is still the most difficult problem that scientists all over the world are striving for solving. People in Hong Kong may wonder about the possibility of a strong earthquake occurring in Hong Kong and the safety of the buildings in Hong Kong. As a structural engineer who pays attention to earthquake activity, the speaker would try his best to answer these questions.

Do We Need to Care for Our Health During Travel?

by

Dr. Abu Saleh Md. Abdullah.

Department of Community Medicine

Travel and tourism are among the world's largest and fastest growing industries and an economic and socio-cultural phenomenon of major importance. Travelling is one of the characteristics of human nature. Both domestic and international tourist arrivals worldwide are on the increase. People are travelling a lot more now than they did before. People travel for various reasons including leisure, recreation, study, business, work, conferences and sometimes for sex. Although travelling is essentially a pleasurable activity it is associated with many potential hazards and measurable risks for a wide spectrum of both communicable or non-communicable diseases and other health problems. Different types of communicable diseases including malaria, hepatitis and other food and water borne diseases and sexually transmitted diseases are endemic in many parts of the world. Non-communicable diseases, principally trauma and injuries including those from natural disasters, are also very important and often present the greatest hazard. However, there is enough scope to minimise the risk of travel health hazards by obtaining appropriate information prior to the travel, seeking pre travel health advice, following preventive health advice and avoiding high risk behaviour. It is crucial to follow preventive measures during travel to ensure a safer and a pleasurable journey. Some of these issues will be discussed in detail during the seminar.

The Correlation of the Energy Spectrum and the Currents in the Disordered Multi-Channel Ring System

by

Mr. Yip Man Kit

Department of Physics

The correlation of the energy spectrum and the currents in the mesoscopic disordered multi-channel ring system were investigated. In our works, we formulated the system by using the tight-binding model. The transfer-matrix-matching method was also adopted to manipulate the boundary condition of the ring system. Results show that under a tight-binding model with N sites on its circumference and M sites on its cross-sectional plane, the correlation of the persistent currents is not so strong as that in the disordered single-channel ring. Results also show that there are at least $(N-1)$ zero crossings in the single-level currents and at least $(N-2)$ zero crossings in the total current at both zero and high temperatures. These lowest bounds are independent of the number of channel (i.e. M). At very high temperatures, the number of zero crossings is exactly $(N-2)$. The above results contrast to that of the disordered single-channel ring system. The weaker rigidity in the correlation of energy spectrum and currents can be due to the fixed number of “moment conditions” which are present in spite of the increase in the size or dimensions of the ring system.

Cantonese Popular Songs: Hybridization of the East and West in Hong Kong in the 1970s

by

Ms. Ivy O.K. Man

Department of Music

The development of Cantonese popular music (Canto-pop) in Hong Kong indicates some blending of both Chinese and Anglo-American musical features. Preliminary research indicates that particular processes of hybridization might have been at work in Canto-pop composition during its formative stage in the 1970s. The presentation examines particular case studies for evidence of musical hybridization, specifically, in the application of Western harmony to Chinese melodic styles and pentatonicism, as well as the synthesis of traditional lyric writing with newer styles of melodic and lyric writing. In addition, the historical and cultural factors that underlie musical hybridization, in particular, the influence of British colonialism on the development of Hong Kong popular musical culture are considered.

A Rules-of-Nesting Game

by

Ms. Sharon C.W. Cheung

Department of Politics and Public Administration

An effective policy can be conceptualized as a collective good benefiting the majority of society. The suppliers of such a collective good, legislators and bureaucrats, are the major actors in its implementation. Whether the good can be supplied at all largely depends upon the joint efforts of legislators and bureaucrats.

To understand why a particular policy is made and how it is designed, we have to examine the incentives and constraints among these actors in particular political settings, constructed by institutions. By definition policy makers have an incentive to effectively exert influence over the policy process. Policy design, through rules selection, is the way in which policy makers show their ability to exercise the right. Thus, constraints are those problems that hinder policy makers' ability to exercise their property right of policy making. With an incentive of exercising property right, policy makers will make an effort to minimize those problems that hinder their right by selecting some particular rules in policy design. Policy makers' choices of policy, in terms of rules selection, thus largely reveal something about the incentives and constraints that they face in the policy process. This research aims at understanding the design of various retirement protection packages that have been proposed and/or adopted in Hong Kong in the last 3 decades by looking at the institutional arrangements that structure interactions among legislators and bureaucrats.

Sex Hormone and Breast Cancer

by

Dr. Xie Bin

Department of Anatomy

Breast cancer is the most common cancer and the second most frequent cause of cancer death in women. The American Cancer Society has estimated a 30% incidence of breast cancer (178,700 new breast cancer cases) and about 16% mortality (43,500 cancer related deaths) in 1998. Unlike the common non-hormone-dependent adult cancers, breast cancer is exceptional before the age 20 years and is rare below 30 years but then the incidence rises very steadily up to the age of 50 years, after which the rate of increase slows down, although the incidence rate continues to rise. This shows that a relationship must exist between ovarian hormones and breast cancer, although it has not been clarified which specific hormones are involved in the breast carcinogenesis. The epidemiological evidence provides strong support for this concept. From among the various recognized risk factors, age of menarche, age of first pregnancy, and age of menopause suggest that endogenous sex hormones may play the predominant role at all stages in the development of breast cancer. Because of their physiologic stimulatory actions on mammary gland, estrogens, especially estrone and estradiol, have long been linked to the risk of breast cancer. Epidemiological evidence come from investigating the effects of exogenous estrogens, such as long-term use of oral contraceptive pills and estrogen replacement therapy for some diseases, on the incidence of breast cancer supports this linkage. Furthermore, animal studies have shown repeatedly that estrogens are able to induce and promote mammary tumors and the removal of the ovaries, or the administration of antiestrogenic drugs, achieves the opposite effect. However, the epidemiological evidence linking estrogens with risk of breast cancer is provocative but not conclusive for two reasons. Firstly, repeated full-term pregnancies at an early age with the consequent long-lasting increase of estrogenic levels are associated with a decreased risk of breast cancer. Secondly, the highest incidence of breast cancer is observed in old women when the estrogenic level has been very low for decades.

Considerable efforts have been made in an attempt to show that women at high risk of breast cancer and/or those who subsequently develop the disease, have abnormal endocrine profiles. However, population studies of high- and low-risk groups and familial studies have failed to yield consistent endocrinological evidence that individual's urinary and plasma estrogen levels are associated with increased risk. Interestingly, the evidence for urinary and plasma steroids is stronger for androgens than for estrogens in predicting breast cancer. Based on these observations, androgens have also been proposed as a possible carcinogenic factor in breast cancer. This proposal is mainly supported by the fact that the incidence of breast cancer is high in post-menopausal women when androgenic levels are high.

Furthermore, administration of androgens for cystic disease has been shown to increase the risk of breast cancer, and that higher levels of androgens and lower levels of progesterone have been found in pre-menopausal women with breast cancer compared to controls. Moreover, Japanese women, who are at a lower risk of breast cancer than their American and British counterparts, have lower plasma androgen levels. More recently, a number of researchers have demonstrated that, among all plasma steroids, the evidence of association of testosterone levels with breast cancer is strongest, although they could not determine whether this association is a cause or a consequence of malignancy.

Human Assisted Reproductive Technology

by

Dr. Xu Jiasen

Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Today more and more people seek help on their reproductive problems. For couples whose infertility cannot be cured by the conventional medical and surgical treatment, doctors may advise them to use Human Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART). The first baby by ART (test tube baby) was born in 1978. The cause of infertility or subfertility includes male factors, female factors, combinations of both and idiopathic causes. *In-vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer (IVF) is the most common ART techniques used. Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) is an advanced technique used to help men with very severe male problem. The other methods, such as sperm donation, sperm/embryo cryopreservation, assisted hatching, co-culture also play a role in ART. Besides, preimplantation diagnosis has been demonstrated to be a powerful technique dealing with human hereditary diseases. Although much has been done on human assisted reproductive technologies in the past decade, the take-home baby rate is still low in most of the IVF clinic all over the world. In fact, our understanding on the mechanism of reproduction in mammals is still limited. For example, we know very little about embryo implant, and none of the culture media can support the development of early embryo as effectively as that developed *in-vivo*. Ethics is quite a sensitive subject that needs consideration in performing ART.

Kieslowski's Faith in Humanity: an Examination of His Work

by

Ms. Gigi Wai Chi Ko

Department of Comparative Literature

Originated as a documentary film-maker, Krzysztof Kieslowski is one of the renowned directors in contemporary Poland. His documentaries, which are mainly short films, concern mostly the living of ordinary Poles. His first feature film, *The Scar*, which won the first prize at the Moscow Film Festival established Kieslowski as a leading figure in the Polish Cinematic school of 'moral anxiety'. The next few films he made, such as, *Camera Buff*, *Blind Chance*, and *No End*, all focus on depicting the relationship between the Poles and the existing government. The protagonists of these films always find themselves in a difficult situation, such as being accused of generating political disturbances, and they have to struggle hard in order to overcome these troubles. Kieslowski first earned his fame in Eastern Europe and it was not until the production of *The Decalogue* that his work became internationally recognized. *The Decalogue* is a 10-hour TV series that deals with various emotional problems of people living in Warsaw. As Kieslowski became more famous around the world, he made conscious efforts to internationalize his films. *The Three Colours* trilogy located in France, Poland and Switzerland, brings Kieslowski's career to a peak. This seminar will particularly draw attention to Kieslowski's faith in humanity. He believed that the emotional crisis of modern people could be 'saved'.

Yam as Food and Medicine

by

Ms. B. Salda

Department of Botony

Tropical root crops are important staple food in the poor and increasingly populated regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. Among these are potato, cassava, sweet potato, yam, and taro. The first three have gained international recognition leaving behind yams and other root crops. Yams belong to the genus *Dioscoreaceae* with more or less 700 species. They have been utilized since the ancient times as food, medicine, animal feeds, and other purposes. In Africa, they are ennobled as the best of all the many basic available staple foods. Industrial uses (which is the concern of the study at present), however, were limited due to some reasons. Food preparations are done in several ways while the poisonous ones are detoxified indigenously to be edible. Most of the species have potential various medicinal value because of their nutritive, sapogenin and alkaloid contents. In fact, they have been used as a base in manufacturing steroidal drugs. The nerve poison substances are also used in hunting, fishing, and other criminal activities. The extent of consumption and utilization of yams depends on the species and intended uses. The details of these are discussed during the presentation of the seminar.

Nitric Oxide and Health

by

Mr. Zhang Xiaohui

Department of Physics and Medicine

It is well known that nitric oxide (NO) is very popular in scientific research and three scientists in these field won the 1998 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. The speaker has two years' experience of NO research. The following talk will provide a brief introduction about the importance of NO in human health: "It was a sensation that this simple common air pollutant, which is formed when nitrogen burns for instance in automobile exhaust fumes, could exert important functions in the organism. It was particularly surprising since NO is totally different from any other known signal molecules and so unstable that it is converted to nitrate and nitrite within 10 seconds. NO was known to be produced in bacteria but this simple molecule was not expected to be important in higher animals such as mammals. Further research results rapidly confirmed that NO is a signal molecule of key importance for the cardiovascular system and it was also found to exert a series of other functions. We know today that NO acts as a signal molecule in the nervous system, as a weapon against infections, as a regulator of blood pressure and as a gate keeper of blood flow to different organs. NO is present in most living creatures and made by many different types of cells. For example, when NO is produced by the innermost cell layer of the arteries, the endothelium, it rapidly spreads through the cell membranes to the underlying muscle cells. Their contraction is turned off by NO, resulting in a dilatation of the arteries. In this way, NO controls the blood pressure and its distribution. It also prevents the formation of thrombi. When NO is formed in nerve cells, it spreads rapidly in all directions, activating all cells in the vicinity. This can modulate many functions, from behaviour to gastrointestinal motility. When NO is produced in white blood cells (such as macrophages), huge quantities are achieved and become toxic to invading bacteria and parasites. "

Radiation and Radiation Health Protection

by

Ms. Deng Aihong

Department Of Physics

We know that except under very unusual circumstances, radiation cannot be seen, smelled, heard or felt. Hence it is surrounded by a fear which is heightened by the memory of atomic warfare. This talk will briefly and simply discuss radioactivity, radiation, types and characteristics of ionizing radiation. In fact, everyone is continually exposed to ionizing radiation, which has always been present in the environment. In this talk, a summary of the average annual effective dose equivalent (mSv y^{-1}) to persons from various radiation sources will be given. Somewhat over half the average effective dose equivalent is due to radon, or more specifically, to the short-lived radioactive daughters into which it decays. Some basic knowledge about radon will be introduced. The biological effects of radiation which depend on the dose, quality of radiation, and time of irradiation can differ widely, but everyone concerns about them. Some biochemical and biological changes, which result from both direct and indirect action of radiation, will be referred to in this talk. Finally, procedures for limiting the dose received from radiation sources outside the human body will be described, and protection from radionuclides that can enter the body will also be discussed.

Oral Candidosis : A Brief Overview

by

Dr.Arjuna N.B. Ellepola

Faculty of Dentistry

The advent of the human immunodeficiency virus infection and the increasing prevalence of compromised individuals in the community due to modern therapeutic advances have resulted in a resurgence of opportunistic infections including oral candidosis. One form of the latter presents classically as a white lesion of “thrush” which is easily diagnosed and cured. Nonetheless, a minority of these lesions appear in new guises such as erythematous candidosis, thereby confounding the unwary clinician and complicating its management. Despite the availability of a number of effective antimycotics for the treatment of oral candidosis, failure of therapy is not uncommon due to the unique environment of the oral cavity where the flushing effect of saliva and the cleansing action of the oral musculature tend to reduce the drug concentration to sub-therapeutic levels. This problem has been partly circumvented by the introduction of the triazole agents which initially appeared to be highly effective. However, an alarming increase of resistant organisms to the triazoles has been reported recently. In this seminar, a brief overview of clinical manifestations of oral candidosis and antimycotic therapy is presented.

Public Rental Housing for Sale The Impacts of Tenants Purchase Scheme

by

Ms. Venus Wai-Sum Chan

Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management

Over the past two decades, the HKSAR government has pushed forward several housing programmes for the purpose of encouraging a higher degree of home ownership in Hong Kong. In January 1998, the government took a more radical step to further extend the idea of home ownership to tenants living in public rental housing by introducing the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS). Under the scheme, the Hong Kong Housing Authority attempts to sell off annually 25,000 public rental housing units to sitting tenants. The scheme provides public housing tenants with opportunities to buy their own flats at reasonable and affordable prices, and widens the choices available to tenants who wish to become homeowners by offering them an extra step on the ladder of home ownership. Furthermore, the scheme aims to make a significant contribution towards the achievement of 70 per cent home ownership target pledged by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address in 1997. A lot of controversial responses have been generated as a result of the implementation of this new home-ownership scheme. Most of them concern the social equity issues of allocating public housing resources among different groups in the public housing sector. In this presentation, I shall examine the social impacts of the Tenants Purchase Scheme on the public housing sector in Hong Kong. Emphasis will be placed on the impacts on public housing tenants and TPS flat owners. Issues like wealth accumulation, dependency on government, investment incentive, community stability, maintenance expenditure, fairness to waiting-list applicants and residualization will be discussed.

What is happening in the Economies of Hong Kong, China and the U.S.A.?

by

Mr. Indrajith Aponso

The School of Economics and Finance

Our success or failure, wealth or poverty, and often, happiness or grievances are intrinsically related to the economy that surrounds us. Simply, economy confronts us almost all the time. No matter how much we may wish that the world could run on love, common sense, or altruism, it runs largely on money, profits and wealth. Instinctively we know that a better understanding of the economy minimises economic risks and, allows us to profit from opportunities it offers. In fact, many of us are practising economists of some form or another. Yet, most of us feel unfamiliar with the economics we encounter everyday. More often than not the jargon and the complexity it surrounds put us off. It is my own conviction that, with a combination of common sense and some acquaintance of how economies operate, understanding the economy may be a quite fascinating hobby. Most of all, there are rewards to such knowledge that goes beyond fascination. It gives us the expertise to manage our hard-earned resources, and with a bit of luck make profits. I must say that tonight you will not hear any economic theory that I often find difficult to have a handle on. Instead, my effort is a very modest one. I simply intend to share my knowledge on how we could analyse each day's news and information on the economy. Here I assume that many of us possess no more than scant knowledge of the economy or may even have discarded it as less stimulating. Even if you are not a novice to economics, especially the ones who follow financial market investments, I hope this discussion will still be a stimulating exposure to share their experiences. First and foremost, we appreciate that Economics is not a Laboratory Science. It is not something we can repeat under controlled environment as it is possible in other natural Sciences. We cannot repeat the Asian crisis of 1998, or test out an economic theory that fully explains what happened and tells us what could be expected. No one has the explanation as to what will happen to the property market here in Hong Kong or, whether the economy has passed its bottom and is recovering. The only way to practise economics is to do so in the real world with all the excitement and messiness that it entails.

A proper understanding the economy essentially depends on the interpretation of a vast amount of information we get every second. However, our reaction to these generous information flows will not be the same across all economic decisions we make. Financial market operations, for instance, display different dynamics to other sectors like trade or production. They are the most competitive and volatile. Financial markets require interpretation of information and action often faster than the information flow itself, while in other sectors, we may wait long for results. The fact that econom-

ics run through our lives makes it very close to our hearts. We all worry about money usually not having enough of it. When we hear of lay-off, we worry about our jobs. When stock market gets bearish, we panic. When inflation rises, we tighten our belts. We worry about the prolonged recession in Japan and adverse sentiments about the US economy. We have other types of worries too. At times, we are pressed to make hard economic choices, often with a considerable anxiety. We haggle over the idea of selling our real estate investment to buy stocks when you see property prices collapse. We see with utter dismay, the crash of stock prices. For most of us, misjudging the weather means a soaking and inconvenience, and often a dry-cleaning bill. In Hong Kong, misjudging the economy means getting drenched in a very different and more expensive way. With a bit of luck, knowledge of economic weather can pay off. Besides the potential profits, watching the economy involves two eternal sources of fascination: money and the idiosyncrasies of human nature. Watching, understanding, and playing the economy and markets can be both rewarding and exciting.

We know by experience the need to estimate the risks lie ahead and opportunities in the offing. We need to have the confidence to make decisions so that the profit making is a less hazardous occupation. The information floating around is trying to tell us what is going on and what might go on. The trick is to understand what that is and how to profit from it. While admitting we cannot control the economy, we can make an educated guess as to what is likely to happen and how it may affect us. However hard we try some remain as elusive as ever. Predicting the movement of the Hang Seng Index is pure wishful thinking. Yet, there are more realistic considerations. A knowledge of the general health of the economy, for instance, may make our lives less stressful. In the least, in bad times, such knowledge enables us to do better than others. In fact, most successful investors play both the ups and downs of an economy and market keeping both their patience and confidence intact. My effort tonight is to present a bird's-eye-view of the economy in a meaningful and thought-provoking manner, and in a pleasing non-technical way. I intend to discuss a few key aspects of how economy functions and, a preliminary knowledge on production, trade, prices, and finance that form the jigsaw puzzle. I hope to present an essential tool of economy watching, GDP, the money supply, the price index, exchange rates, interest rates, inflation, budget deficit, stock market, exchange rates etc., in both historical and contemporary context. This knowledge, I hope, will give you a better idea so that you can gain more control of the information and make sense of what it entails.

A Geological Journey Along the Silk Road

by

Mr. Solomon Buckman

Department of Earth Sciences

A fundamental observation of the Earth's surface is that it is divided into continents and oceans. The continents are neither static, nor have remained of constant shape and size through geologic time. How continents grow is therefore a topic of global significance. Many contemporary models for continental collision and deformation are based on observations of the Cenozoic tectonic evolution of the Tibetan Plateau, north of the Himalayan mountain range, which is still developing as a result of India's collision with Asia. Further to the north, in Central Asia, older orogenic systems, which are at least as large, exist but they await detailed documentation and study. The Altaid orogenic collage in NW China represents the results of massive continental growth during the Early Paleozoic. Studies of the tectonic assembly of China therefore have the potential to increase our overall understanding of many fundamental plate tectonic processes. China is host to some of the highest and lowest regions on Earth. The Himalayan Mountains exceed 8000 m. The Tianshan regularly exceeds 7000 m and the Tibetan Plateau averages around 4500 m above sea level. In contrast, the inland Tarim and Junggar Basins drop below sea level. The lowest depression in China is the Turpan Pendi at 154 m below sea level and found adjacent to the Tien Shan. These actively forming mountains and basins are part of a dynamic landscape that has been built by tectonic forces that have been operating for at least the past 500 million years and continue to shape the continental landmass of Eurasia. The geology and geomorphology record the timing and nature of the major tectonic events that affect the area. NW China and much of Central Asia are the last relatively unstudied/unresolved, and potentially the most exciting tectonic collages on Earth. Collectively, this area is referred to as the "Paleo-Asiatic orogenic belt" or "Altoids". It includes parts of the Siberian, Tarim and Kazakhstan Blocks and is composed of a patchwork assemblage of accretionary prisms, volcanic-arcs and microcontinents that collided and accreted to continental nuclei of Northern Asia during the Paleozoic (past 540 million years).

NW China is presently the furthest place on Earth from any ocean. However, this wasn't always the case because fragments of oceanic crust (ophiolites) have been preserved along ancient sutures marking the collision boundary between two continental fragments during plate migration subduction processes consumed large tracts of oceanic crust. Remnants of this ocean crustal material (ophiolites) are preserved along belts between continental or island arc fragments within China.

The break-up of Gondwana resulted in various fragments of Gondwana moving away and eventually colliding with the southern margin of Asia. Each collisional event is recorded as an orogeny (mountain building event), which is expressed geographically as a long chain of mountains that de-

velop as a result of subduction or continental collision. The Tien Shan is an example of this and constitutes one of the world's major intra-continental mountain ranges. It is about 2500 km long with summits in excess of 7000 m, and extends through Xinjiang, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikistan.

The Paleozoic was a time of widespread mountain building activity in Central Asia. However, once the Siberian, Kazakhstan and Tarim plates had amalgamated together in the Late Carboniferous and subduction related processes had ceased to operate, Central Asia underwent a period of extension throughout the Mesozoic (245-66 Ma). This is marked by the widespread intrusion of granite batholiths and diabase dykes and the development of large sedimentary basins but eventually they were closed to the sea and were transformed into intra-continental fluvial dominated basins. These basins now represent an important petroleum source.

Central Asia was further affected by the India/Asia collision in the Cenozoic (60-0 Ma). Large strike-slip faults emanating from the Himalayan collisional zone cut through the older rocks of Central Asia. This style of collision is referred to as extrusion tectonics after the India/Asia was successfully modeled using simple plasticine/clay models. Examples of these in West Junggar include the Dalabute and Junggar faults, which are still active today.

The ancient Silk Road has been used for centuries as a trading route between Asia and the Mediterranean regions. The infamous Mongolian warlord Genghis Khan marched through the Junggarian (Dzungarian) Gateway around 1200 AD on his crusade throughout Central Asia. At its peak his empire extended from Beijing to Eastern Europe and the silk highway was a busy and important trading route. If it hadn't been for the large faults, such as Junggarian Gateway, that cut a path through the otherwise impenetrable West Junggar and Tianshan mountains, the world would have been a very different place with a very different history. The project is of major significance and will lead to the following advances:

Academic: Better understandings of the processes of continental growth; the tectonic evolution of NW China and the Altaid orogenic collage; the mechanism(s) of emplacement of ophiolites. By comparison with modern SE Asia (a tectonic collage in the making) we can forward model the tectonic evolution of this area and we can also use SE Asia as a uniformitarian analogue of what the Altaid region may once have been like. Collaboration with co-workers in China will also lead to improved academic/research links. More detailed knowledge of the regions systems will have the additional benefit of leading to better seismic hazard awareness.

Industry: Many hydrocarbon and metallogenic resourcees are genetically linked to various tectonic settings. Exploration for such resources is largely based on prevailing tectonic models for any given area. Our geological mapping and tectonic modeling will provide a foundation for predictive modeling for the location of economic mineral deposits associated with various tectonic settings. Development of any more accurate models for the tectonic evolution of NW China will aid the speed, efficiency and suc-

cess-rate of resource exploration. The significance of this has already been recognized in on-going Chinese government funding of the work of key local geologists in the National Science and Technology Committee Project 305 “Mineral Deposits of Xinjiang Province.”

*Articles by residents
from
Canada, China and Nepal
on their feelings about
the Robert Black College, Hong Kong
and the relationship between
Hong Kong and their homeland*

The Hong Kong - British Columbia Connection

by

Ms. Suzanne Neilson, Canada

The relationship between Hong Kong and British Columbia, in particular its economic capital of Vancouver, is undeniable special. It is an urban connection, focusing on the movement of intergenerational families between the cities, and very dependent on the fragility of employment and security. While Vancouver's population has increased by 230,000 with migration from Hong Kong (between 1991-1996), it is also estimated that as many as 500,000 people in Hong Kong are able to leave if "things go wrong" under Beijing's leadership. The importance of this relationship is reflected in the fact that Hong Kong is one of Canada's largest diplomatic missions with 31 Canadians and 144 locals employed.

Although Canada's past with respect to greeting Asian newcomers is far from perfect, the changed immigration policy of 1967 and the government's subsequent encouragement of "multiculturalism" resulted in a more positive environment. People from Hong Kong have looked specifically to Canada for three main reasons. Security is the prime attraction, and statistics show that following the June 4th Incident, numbers moving to Canada steadily increased. Similarly, the number of people coming from Taiwan rose significantly following China's missile threat across the Taiwan Strait in early 1996. However, poor employment levels and opportunities for newcomers has resulted in fathers working in Hong Kong with families residing in Vancouver. This astronaut phenomenon is often cited for its role in breaking down the traditional family setup. Second, Canadian education which is internationally accepted and bilingual in focus has meant that those from "Greater China" comprised 36% of the University of British Columbia's Fall 1996 intake of international degree students. The different levels of migration, in this case, between the constituent regions of Greater China directly reflect perceptions of personal security and levels of development. And finally, Vancouver specifically is chosen as a destination for many Hong Kong Chinese given its reputation as culturally diverse city. 14% of Vancouver's population speaks a Chinese dialect, 3 Chinese language newspapers circulate, there are 2 Chinese radio and TV stations, and interpreters are needed in many city-council meetings, etc... Such talk does not intend to paint a completely rosy picture. Racism does exist. In fact a recent CBC/Vancouver Sun Poll shows that 1 out of 5 people polled had been a victim of racist behaviour. Hate crimes carried out in other areas of the world do not exist, however, and given the huge influx of immigration to Vancouver in the past 5 years, it is doing comparably well. The immigration rate for BC has been more than double the national rate since 1992.

One of the most controversial issues discussed regularly in the news is Canada's business immigration programme. In addition to the traditional

routes of immigrating via family sponsorship and claiming refugee status, this new scheme enables people to immigrate if they are able to invest approximately HK\$2,750,000 in a specific business venture or if their entrepreneurial undertaking creates employment for at least one Canadian. A points system grades applicants according to labour market demand. This system had been criticized as a “sell your passport scheme”, blatantly favouring the wealthier classes. Moreover, the logic of this programme is faulty - those business immigrants whose applications are accepted and recruited for their “sense” of business are then prevented from using these skills due to government policy stipulations. For instance, ventures must be launched at a certain geographical location and each business plan must be approved by the government. While noting these restrictions, the astronaut phenomenon, the closure of business ventures soon after owners obtain permanent residence status, and the return migration to Hong Kong after receiving Canadian citizenship soon makes much more sense. Very often, these latter circumstances are regarded as foul play by newcomers but investigation shows that the misunderstanding is rooted in the contradiction of the system.

In sum, some issues for discussion present themselves. Broadly, these include, the future implications for the HK-Canada relationship given Beijing’s assumption of Hong Kong’s foreign relations control; the maintenance of strong ties of HK immigrants with their past homeland and families; and whether or not a business immigration policy would ever work given its discriminatory nature. Important to the latter, however, is remembering that Canada similarly maintains the most open door liberal policy for refugees - 70% of those people who make it to Canada to claim refugee status are permitted to remain.

家

董春方教授

上海，中國

大凡很多人都有這樣的經歷，當你擁有某樣東西時，你不會覺得它的可貴和珍惜，而一旦當你失去它時，卻感到它的珍貴難得，以至於久久留連忘返。香港大學的 **Robert Black College** 柏立基學院，給我的正是這樣的感受。有幸獲得香港大學的資助，前來香港大學作為訪問學者。雖然早已過而立之年，且也遊歷過多個異國他鄉。然而在來港之前，卻終日惶惶不安，擔心如何度過在香港的半年時間。來到香港後，我被安排在 **Robert Black College** 居住。以前曾經來過香港，所以香港的景緻並沒引起我多大的衝動，相反，當接我的朋友把我送到 **College** 時，眼前的情景令人頓感清新和驚喜，也大鬆一口氣，來港前的不安以及路途的疲累不知不覺地消失殆盡。憑借職業的習慣，我對建築物及環境極為敏感，更使人驚喜的是在寸土寸金的香港，**Robert Black College** 居然是二、三層高度的仿中國傳統建築的庭院式建築風格。客房以及其他一些設施依着山勢，以庭院與連廊和諧組合而成，錯落於終年常綠、鬱鬱蔥蔥的山林之中。比較香港城市的擁擠和壓抑，**Robert Black College** 彷彿是一個世外桃園。

孤獨，對出門在外的人來說是難免的，對初來乍到的地方的陌生和語言的不同，多少使人感到不安。然而當你居住在 **Robert Black College** 時，你不會有這樣的感覺，而給你的卻是家一樣的溫暖。熱情、親切的管理人員和服務生給予你並非酒店式的服務，而全然是家人般的關心和幫助。來自世界各地的學者和遊客，盡管只是萍水相逢，卻像是久違的老友。居住在這裏一些當地學生，又給寧靜的 **College** 增添一份生氣和活潑，像是大家庭的一群可愛的孩子。**Robert Black College** 所營造的正是這樣一種家的氣氛。

每天在 **College** 的餐廳用餐，是我最重要和愉快的時刻，確切的說簡直就是期待。重要和愉悅的不但是那美味的家常菜，更多的是見到那一張張服務生的笑臉，以及和各地學者的暢談。在

這裏，學者們雖然來自世界各地，而且專業各不相同，然而卻一見如故，無所不談，海闊天空，大到宇宙哲學，小至購物瑣事。每天都有不同的話題，每天都有不同的感受。老朋友離開了，新朋友又來了，於是也帶來了新鮮的話題。在餐廳，你可以了解到世界各地的風土人情以及時事變遷，瞭解到不同專業的深奧和廣博。餐廳與其說是College用餐的地方，倒不如說是College家庭的起居室，成為每個在College的客人生活的重要部分。

每天從嘈雜的市區下班回到College，那種回家的感覺尤其強烈。香港是一個極具競爭性和高效率的社會，競爭性和高效率無疑是經濟發展的要求，然而也給人性以壓迫。每天，當你在壓抑的寫字樓熬過一天，穿過擁擠不堪的街道，回到Robert Black College，就像終於回到了家中，你會忘卻白天的煩累，洗淨渾身街道的廢氣和灰塵，身心得到安慰，這就是Robert Black College。

轉眼半年就要過去，隨着離開日子的天天逼近，我越加留連Robert Black College，越加覺得它的難得和珍貴。

悠遠的情愫

王雪萊醫生

湖北，中國

因為忙，大多數的時候我只能見到柏立基學院的晨与夜，但這已足夠了。听夜晚的風清，窗外一輪明月潔淨如水；看晨霧散盡，斑駁的日影在石徑上跳躍成歡快的音符。腳步是匆忙的，但心頭卻存著舒緩与宁靜，因為我感受到了，与此同樣宁靜与舒緩的，是柏立基學院的美。他的美，是在于他的柔；他的柔，又在于他的寬厚；他的寬厚，似乎顯著平靜；他的平靜里又确乎含情。他默默蘊含著的是我們所不可知的悠遠，和同著這悠遠所一同迸發出來的激情與浪漫，思念與憂傷，相識與別離，等待與盼望。

窗外

假如你推開窗子看見我
請不要惊惑
在你會心的微笑里
我不敢告訴
我已候你多時

假如我開成一朵粉白的花
那一定是為了你
為了在你不經意的時候
將我采下
嗅我，又輕輕夾我在書頁里
或是將我插在一只干涸的瓶子里
整日的地注視著
或是遺忘在房間的一角

假如我長出翅膀來
那一定是為了你
為了你遠遠地能看見

我愉快地在湖面上飛翔
在樹林的上空
和青山的遠頂
飛翔 —
然後，我將飛回到你的身邊
在你的懷裡
輕梳我的羽毛

假如我突然從您的眼前消失了
那一定是為了你
為了你的愛情
會注意到我的憂傷
那暗處不再有一雙眼睛
在深情地把你窺望

假如有一天
我不幸而死去
我一定是化作一只白蝶
在你必經的小徑上
追蹤著並在你的趾印上翻飛
那時，你會厭棄我，認不出我
並且輕輕將我赶走么？

假如你推開窗子看見我
請不要驚惑
在你會心的微笑里
我不敢告訴：
我已候你多時.....

A Comparison of Life in Hong Kong and Nepal

by

Mr. A.B. Gurung, Nepal

Why compare Hong Kong with Nepal? Although one may not see a very convincing reason, I am trying to show the existence of some links. Hong Kong is a modern city and an international financial centre, which has attracted many people from all over the world. It developed very rapidly during the 1970s and is now one of the Asia's largest economic regions. Since July, 1997 she has returned to her motherland after 156 years of British rule and now its official name is Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China. It is a very beautiful city and every visitor likes it very much. Although its total land area is quite small (around 1,100 sq km) it is blessed with beautiful natural sceneries and consists of a variety of land areas, islands, forests and the hills. Since there are eight tertiary institutes and some of them are within the top ten among the Asian institutions, it has attracted many people from the academic world, including myself. The University of Hong Kong is located very near the heart of the city and the accommodation cost in the area is very high. Therefore one of the main problems for students in HKU is to find a good accommodation at a reasonable cost. Although there are some undergraduate and graduate hostels, they can accommodate only around 25 percent of the whole student body. Therefore a large portion of the student population have to live off campus. May Wing of Robert Black College, where the graduate students live is in my opinion the best accommodation provided by the University. The College is an ideal place for research students. With a quiet and green environment, it gives impetus for research and other creative work. Further, it organizes a series of activities throughout the year. They are mainly seminars, guest nights, and other cultural functions.

One of the famous tourist spots of Hong Kong is Victoria Peak and it is located close to the College. Walking on the trail between the College and the peak is a very nice experience. Besides the university people, many other hikers from several parts of Hong Kong go up to Victoria Peak via this trail. Specially at weekends and on public holidays the morning trail will be full of people. A very beautiful jungle area lies on this way which is a very good place for recreation. It is a very nice experience to walk and do some exercises there which is full of fresh air. One of my regular routines during my stay in the College has been to go to the peak with colleagues. It is a very good relaxation specially after a day's work. Hong Kong provides a very high level of education to children. It is compulsory and free up to mid secondary school level. The health condition of people is very good, therefore the life expectancy is quite long. However, in recent years there have been some serious health hazards in Hong Kong, e.g. the bird flu virus. To curb it, the government had to take a bold decision of slaughtering about 1.4 million poultry which caused a big financial loss to the city.

Hong Kong has a very good network of surface and sea transportation system. Although natural disasters like typhoon, rain and flood are common, it has a very good forecasting system so that people can take precaution well in advance. The markets in Hong Kong are very famous all over the world and its streets would remain quite busy throughout the day. Despite a number of crimes, especially due to the recent economic slump, it is one of the safest cities in the world. It seems that government is always committed to do the best for the welfare of its people at any cost. One such example is the recent intervention of the stock market which jeopardized the international reputation of the free market status of Hong Kong but it succeeded in defending the dollar peg and prevented the economy from collapsing. People in Hong Kong are quite frank, friendly, helpful and hardworking and due to the advancement of the technologies and hard work of the Hong Kong people, life in Hong Kong is now very comfortable and safe.

On the other hand, Nepal is a sovereign Hindu monarchy and a small Himalayan country which covers an area of 147,181 sq km. Earlier, the country was not like a unified nation of today: several small kingdoms were there. The process of unification was started by King Prithvi Narayan Shah (forefather of the current king) whose kingdom was in Gorkha. However, it was completed only in 1768 after his death. The palace was then moved to Kathmandu and the hereditary monarchy system continued. But in 1846 prime minister Janga Bahadur Rana took all the power of the king and established hereditary prime ministership which lasted until 1951. The nation's first election was held in 1959, but in 1960 King Mahendra (father of the present king) dismissed the cabinet, dissolved the parliament and banned political parties. A constitution was created in 1962 based on a non-party panchayat (council) system of government. In 1980 a referendum approved a modified version of the panchayat system and direct parliamentary elections were held in 1981. Since Nepal is a land-locked country, most of its overseas business are done via Indian ports. A dispute with India about the renewal of trade and transit treaty led to the closing of most border crossings from March 1989 to July 1990, and the resulting economic crisis fueled demands for political reform. After months of violence by the opposition with the support of India, King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev dissolved the parliament. The opposition formed an interim government in April 1990, and a new constitution creating a constitutional monarchy and a bicameral legislature became effective on November 9, 1990. Now we have a system of constitutional monarch and parliamentary democracy. Multiparty legislative elections held in May 1991 were won by the centrist Nepali Congress Party. Mid-term elections in November 1994, which were called after the government lost a parliamentary vote, resulted in a hung parliament and the communists, who emerged as the single largest party, formed a minority government. Since then the government have been changed many times because of the splitting of different political parties. A new election is due very shortly.

The total population of Nepal is approximately 22 million. It has a very rich culture and social life. There are people of about twenty different ethnic backgrounds and each has their own special life style, culture and dialect. Officially, Nepal has been declared as a Hindu Kingdom and the main religion is Hinduism. The king is regarded as reincarnation of the Hindu God Bishnu. Other religions practised are Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Sikh, etc. Different people celebrate their own festivals and rites throughout the year. Dashain is the biggest festival and other festivals are Tihar, Lhochhar, birthdays of Lords Buddha, Krishna, etc. Borders of Nepal are shared with two giant neighbors, namely China and India. We are dependent on both of them in many respects. We have very good relationship with them and we receive a lot of cooperations too. However, there are several problems for the development of the country. In my view, the main problems of country can be described in 3 Ps. They are, in the descending order, : poverty, politics and pollution. According to the recent publication of the UN, the per capita income is about USD 220 and nearly half of the country's population live below the poverty line. Although Nepal receives many donations from various sources, the country is still facing severe financial problems. Nepal's democracy is still in the infancy level and no political party seems to be committed to improve the welfare of the people. The problem of pollution is only in the city area where a large number of old vehicles with poor quality fuel are used and there is lack of good management for solid wastes.

The literacy rate in Nepal is about 40 percent. Land locked geography and difficult mountainous terrains are also main factors hindering the development of the country. Nepal is backward in the field of science and technology. We import a lot of goods from China, India and many other overseas countries. Compared to import, export is minimal, which includes some hand-made carpets, garments, tea and herbs. The main income of foreign currency is tourism. To promote tourism, the government of Nepal promoted the year 1998 as the "Visit Nepal Year" with several interesting activities and it was partially successful.

The main occupation of the people in Nepal is farming. More than 90 percent of the people live in the rural areas. The terrain is hilly and there are no motor roads in most parts of the country. It takes around a week from the most remote place to the nearest motor road. The fertility of the land is very low and most of the fields are suitable for growing only one crop in a year. The southern part of the country, which occupies about 17 percent of the land, is very fertile. It contributes the major portion of the country's food stuff. Nepal has very few natural resources and minerals except its big river systems. Most of these rivers are originated from the Himalayas and pass through steep slopes. Therefore, one thing we have in abundance is the hydro-power potential. It has the second largest hydroelectric potential in the world after Norway. But due to the lack of technology and funds, political instability, environmental problems, relationship with neighbors, etc. development of many hydroelectric projects are being delayed.

Nepal has very beautiful natural sceneries. In the north of country, there is a very beautiful range of Himalaya Mountains. The highest mountain in the world, Mt. Everest (Elevation 8,848m, known as Chyomolama in Chinese) lies in Nepal. Every year thousands of people from all over the world go to Nepal for sight seeing and mountaineering. There are very high-class mountaineers and trekkers who may guide and lead you to the top of the world. In recent days very interesting things relating to Mt. Everest, have happened. Mr. Kaji Sherpa of Nepal has reached the roof of the world in a record time of 18 hours from the base camp without the aid of oxygen. Besides Mt. Everest, there are seven other mountains with altitudes of more than 8,000m in Nepal, while total number of such mountains in the world is 14. Mr. Kaji has a plan to climb all of them in the near future. During these days a young boy aged 15 is attempting to reach to the top of Mt. Everest around middle of May 1999. If he succeeds, he would be the youngest man to conquer it. Another plan is to spend more than 24 hours on the top of the roof of the world. Until now the maximum time spent by a climber in the single journey is more than 30 minutes. There are several country parks and wild safari where one can see the life of wild animals. The rural area of Nepal is very beautiful and people there are quite happy in their own life style and culture. One can see very interesting arts and cultures of people of different ethnic groups throughout the country. The lord Buddha was born in Lumbini of Nepal in 563 BC, which is also a very attractive place to visit. Previously restricted places for the foreign nationals are now opened to everybody and there are a lot of curiosities that may have been hidden.

The life of a Nepalese is very hard. Most of the Nepalese believe in god. They are very helpful, friendly but poor and not much educated. Compared to the life in Hong Kong, life in Nepal is much more challenging but Nepalese people are happily facing it. Hong Kong and Nepal are two friendly countries for a long time. Hong Kong is now part of China and Nepal is China's neighbor. There is a very amiable relationship between Nepal and China. We have a lot of trades with Tibet. Many Nepalese have visited Hong Kong long time ago. The main link of the relationship between Hong Kong and Nepal is the British army. Many Nepalese soldiers, known as Gurkha, have served here and have done a very good job. They are quite famous all over the world. Many children of these soldiers who were born here during the British rule have been given the right to live in Hong Kong. So many of them have now made Hong Kong their second home. Since people born before 1983 only were given the right of abode and many did not know about this privilege, they rushed to register during the hand-over period, fearing that they would lose their right. During that time the construction work of the Hong Kong new airport was under way so most of them got an opportunity to serve in this project. Unfortunately, 4 people died there. So, I would say that one whole generation of Nepalese people contributed to the development of Hong Kong. Even after the return of sovereignty, the system of working in Hong Kong is the same as before under the principle of "one country, two systems". Therefore, Nepalese

living here are receiving the same treatment as before. Now Hong Kong and Nepal have further enhanced their relationship. There is a permanent Nepalese Consulate General's office in Hong Kong and a section of Chinese Embassy in Nepal looks after Hong Kong affairs is supporting Nepal by providing financial assistance to students from Nepal for higher education. Every year at least one student from Nepal is receiving a scholarship to study MSc in Urban Planning in the University of Hong Kong. There are a few other Nepalese students who receive financial support from the government of Hong Kong to study in the tertiary institutions of Hong Kong. I hope that such cooperation and good relationship will improve and expand further in the future.

End-of-Millennium Lectures

Sino-British Relationship, Hong Kong, **at Turn of Millennium**

by

Sir Andrew Burns
British Consul-General in Hong Kong

Introduction

College Master, Pro-Chancellor, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a very great pleasure for my wife and me to return to Robert Black College as your Guests of Honour - on this most suitable of evenings, St Andrew's night.

Links with Hong Kong University

Since 1996, 60 outstanding graduates of Hong Kong University have received the prestigious British Chevening scholarships allowing them to go to the UK for periods of postgraduate study and training.

Since 1911, the British Government has supported the King Edward VII scholarships at Hong Kong University. The names of the scholars are engraved on the walls at the entrance of the Loke Yew Hall.

In more recent years, through the UK/Hong Kong Joint Research Scheme, the British Council has been supporting collaborative research at postdoctoral level. Over 40 projects involving Hong Kong University researchers have been supported since 1991 covering areas from environmental management to non-linear optics and from urban planning to liquid crystals. This represents an investment, in seed funding, of around three million Hong Kong dollars.

In 1997, researchers at the Social Science Research Centre of Hong Kong University designed an internet resource for students in Hong Kong and Macau. Funded by the FCO, this project was launched, in May 1997, as the British Studies Electronic Route Map.

Taking the reform agendas in the UK and Hong Kong as a starting point, one of the roles of the British Council is to encourage discussion through conferences and workshops. Hong Kong University has been a strong partner in many of these events - working with us to produce conferences on the legal aspects of medicine (1997), industry academic links (1998), the reform of the legal system (1999) and architecture and urban design (1999).

The Faculty of Law at Hong Kong University has been an active partner in the British Council's law summer school since 1987. The school provides hands-on training in advocacy and trial protocol.

Next year, the British Council hopes to work with the new Institute of Economic Policy and Business Strategy on a research collaboration examining the development of the knowledge-driven economy and with the Fac-

ulty of Education on a seminar looking at the experience of training teachers.

Tonight however I propose to speak first about the State Visit. Secondly about Sino-British relations more broadly. I shall then touch on PRC membership of the WTO. And finish with how our relationship with Hong Kong fits into this picture.

Sino-British Relations

State Visit

As you know President Jiang Zemin visited the UK last month. It was the first State Visit by a Chinese President. It reciprocated The Queen's State Visit to China in 1986.

The visit was an undoubted success. It received "block-buster" coverage in the Chinese press. It marked the coming of age of our relationship with China, and set the seal on a series of high-level visits over the last two years, including the Prime Minister's visit to China and Hong Kong last October and Premier Zhu's visit to the UK last spring.

There was a lot of ceremonial. The traditional welcoming ceremony on Horse Guards Parade, the banquet at Buckingham Palace, the Banquet at the Guildhall, lunch with businessmen at the Banqueting Hall, and visits to Greenwich, the Millennium Dome, the British Museum (to open a magnificent exhibition of Chinese treasures) and Cambridge University.

But there was plenty of substance in the visit too. A huge delegation of senior Ministers met their British counterparts. Commercial deals totalling over HKD 40 billion were announced during the visit including major announcements on BP's huge petrochemical investment in Jinshan and National Power's electrical generating contract at Jiaxing. And the UK also enjoys 50% of the deal on Airbuses which was announced during Jiang's subsequent visit to France.

This is against the background of the UK as the biggest European investor in China. There are 2000 British Joint Ventures in the mainland. UK exports total nearly HKD 11 billion. And investment goes the other way too: there are now around 100 Chinese companies registered in the UK, up from 40 in 1996. The Chinese Government is now actively promoting outward investment and the UK, the world's second largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment, is a natural European base for Chinese enterprises.

I do not need to reiterate to this audience the importance of China in the 21st century, or the need for good relations between countries like my own and China. Suffice it to say that China represents one fifth of the world's population, has a Permanent Seat on the UN Security Council, and is ever growing as an economic force. Its political orientation, its economic reforms, its financial stability, its international relations and its environmental practices all have an impact on the rest of the world.

We want to engage with China. We support the process of change and reform which China is going through. We want to be involved in that pro-

cess - and we are already.

Human Rights

Those of you who read the British press reports of the State Visit might not have come away with the positive view of Sino-British relations which I have just laid out. For the British (and Hong Kong) media, human rights dominated the visit. However I think it is fair to say that there was a lot of unbalance and misleading reporting.

This was particularly true of the question of the handling of the demonstrations during the visit. There were in fact only two formal complaints from the press - both interestingly from Hong Kong and both avoidable if the journalists concerned had registered their interest in covering the event in the first place.

Exactly how the right balance is struck between ensuring the safety of the Royal Family and visiting VIPs and allowing freedom of expression and legitimate protest is an operational matter for the police on the spot, who alone can weigh up the various local considerations. But there can be no doubt that the visitors were well aware that the demonstrations and expressions of public concern were taking place.

Human rights is firmly on our agenda with the Chinese. We have successfully established a bilateral dialogue with the Chinese Government on human rights issues to complement the EU's dialogue, in which we also play a very active role. We have used the dialogue to raise concerns over Tibet, recent crack-downs on dissidents, the development of political rights, freedom of religious expression. We have encouraged the Chinese to ratify and then stick to the international human rights Covenants.

And our Ministers have raised human rights with the Chinese leadership, from the top down. The Prime Minister did so with President Jiang in London last month. And more recently, FCO Minister of State John Battle had a long and detailed exchange with his opposite number when he visited Beijing just before he came here earlier this month.

Neither do we simply talk to officials. John Battle visited a Hani village in the mountains of south-west China, where a major British charity, Save the Children Fund, has been working. He talked to local villagers about the issues that concerned them. Groups like the Save the Children Fund work on the ground in China on human rights issues that affect ordinary people, with projects on orphanages, women's rights and the prevention of HIV and AIDS.

Nor is human rights dialogue just about words. We are engaging in legal cooperation, educational exchanges, development assistance and other ways of seeking to improve the lives of people across China.

Practical Cooperation

Let me give you some other examples of engagement. We see strengthening the rule of law as a fundamental part of any process of modernisation

and development. And we recognise that this is also one of the aspirations of the Chinese leadership. We have laid particular stress on developing legal cooperation with China, bringing judges and lawyers to the UK, offering advice on the reform of Chinese law, and so on.

Hong Kong has an important role to play in this too. The British Government runs an annual training scheme for young Chinese lawyers in partnership with the mainland Ministry of Justice and the Department of Justice here in Hong Kong. For the last ten years or so we have been sending nearly 20 young lawyers each year to the UK for nine months, and then bringing them to Hong Kong, where they spend time in local firms. The experience they gain not only helps them and their firms in the mainland, but also enhances understanding in the UK and Hong Kong of the mainland legal system.

Education is a priority not only in the UK and here in Hong Kong, but also for the Chinese leadership - it is another foundation pillar of successful modernisation. We are doing our bit to help. There are now some 7000 Chinese students in the UK, and we intend that this should build up to 20,000 by 2001. These people will be a key influence on China's future development, and will be in the vanguard of change in the new millennium.

We have too a substantial programme of development assistance. Projects include HKD 190 million to help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS; over HKD 200 million over three years to help with the restructuring of SOEs; and HKD 120 million on basic education services in Gansu Province.

In addition, we are sharing our experience to help China tackle many of its environmental priorities, especially water shortages and pollution, urban air pollution, toxic and hazardous wastes, and soil erosion. Existing and planned projects include :

- HK\$ 84 million in help to increase China's institutional and technical ability to improve the availability and quality of water supply;

- a HK\$ 87 million programme to assist Yunnan authorities in planning sustainable environmental development;

- helping Shanghai minimise waste, control industrial pollution and plan water supply;

- advising on clean energy efficiency measures in Guizhou and Shanxi;

- financing an environmental health programme in Tibet;

- and advising on safety standards in civil nuclear power stations.

UK/China Forum

At the same time as the State Visit, the inaugural meeting of the UK/China Forum took place in London. Opened by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair and President Jiang Zemin. Chaired by Michael Heseltine and Prof. Song Jian. Some 120 people involved. The next meeting will be in Beijing in October 2000.

The Forum covered a number of areas:

- (i) education and culture - focusing on opportunities to promote distance learning, training and education for industry, cooperation between the creative industries and the need for dialogue between innovators and educationalists;
- (ii) the environment - including sharing notes on environmental law, impact assessments;
- (iii) finance - stressing the importance of transparency and good corporate governance;
- (iv) industry - scope for business exchanges, making more UK training available, and encouraging Chinese investment in the UK;
- (v) law - not only environmental law, but useful discussion on intellectual property rights; the Forum will return to commercial law at a later date;
- (vi) the media - the Forum noted differences in the two countries' media, but also similarities, including the impact of the internet and technological revolution; they agreed to follow up with some analysis of the differences and promote dialogue on areas such as development of IT.

WTO

We want to engage China in the international economy. The recent agreement between China and the US on WTO accession is an important part of that process. Accession should bring China greater influence in the direction of the world trade agenda, and greater attractiveness as a market for inward investors. There are still steps to be taken, not least our own European negotiations with the mainland. We look forward to positive Chinese engagement with the EU on that.

British priorities for WTO include tariffs, services, especially financial services, agreement to and uniform enforcement of WTO agreements, transparency and non-discrimination in state regulations, and freedom for UK companies to import, store, market and distribute their own goods and services. Overall we are convinced that China's membership of the WTO on the right terms will bring considerable benefits to UK businesses wishing to export to and invest in China.

So Chinese accession should be a "win-win" situation. And that includes for Hong Kong. There are challenges facing Hong Kong already as it carves out its niche in the twenty-first century. Things will change as China continues to open up. But the opportunities for Hong Kong will remain. We believe that Hong Kong has the necessary skills and dynamism to grasp those opportunities, hard work though it may be.

Hong Kong

And at the same time as relations with China blossom, our relationship with Hong Kong is also in a new phase. The handover has opened the way to a new forward-looking relationship with Hong Kong.

Our interests here are huge. The UK remains the largest external investor in Hong Kong. And Hong Kong places 80% of its European investment in the UK. We want this to continue - it is only right and natural that Hong Kong should look to the UK as its key partner in Europe, and its gateway to the European Single Market.

Hong Kong has been through a testing period. The handover period itself was navigated remarkably smoothly. Then Hong Kong was hit by the most severe economic downturn in living memory. Hong Kong is emerging from this thinking about its future - its place in China, in the region, as one of the great international cities.

What has struck me is how much many of those themes have common with thinking in the UK. Both our societies are in a sense re-inventing themselves: moving to higher value activities; trying to surf the IT and e-commerce waves rather than be engulfed by them; working out how to deal with major new competitive pressures whether from lower cost producers or from the mobility and speed of ideas and businesses. This means that we are grappling with many of the same issues. The environment, education, developing information technology - all areas where we have much to learn from each other.

The British Council plays a vital role in improving standards of English - so necessary if Hong Kong is to consolidate its position as the premier international city in Asia. And the Council and Consulate-General have also organised a host of seminars on issues of topical interest and concerns - the environment, health policy, intelligent buildings, privatisation, civil service reform, etc.

One of the areas where the links are the strongest is the law. The Lord Chancellor has visited Hong Kong three times since the handover. In the summer the British Council organised a British Law Month in Hong Kong. The setpiece was a colloquium on the Changing Face of UK Law, which was well attended in Hong Kong from the Chief Justice down.

So we are active in supporting Hong Kong's growth and development. At the same time we are also living up to our responsibilities to the SAR as a co-signatory of the Joint Declaration.

Part of this is our continued commitment to the 3.5 million BN(O) passport holders in Hong Kong. When traveling overseas, they are entitled to the same consular protection and advice as any other British national. And we provide this regularly, in South East Asia as well as further afield.

We also have a commitment to speak out if we believe that the Joint Declaration is under threat. FCO Minister of State John Battle reiterated that commitment in Hong Kong only a couple of weeks ago. And as part of

that process the Foreign Secretary will continue to report regularly to the British Parliament on developments in Hong Kong.

We want to see the aspects of Hong Kong that make it unique maintained. I mean the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, the lack of corruption, a level playing-field, the preservation of human rights, and press freedom. Although our overall assessment in these areas is broadly positive, I do not need to remind this audience of the controversies since the handover. We have been watching and listening. We have made judicious comments from time to time. And we shall continue to do so. But the key assurance for Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and best guarantee of its future success is in the self-confidence of its people. Their alertness to potential threats, their readiness to debate openly and their willingness to seize all opportunities that come along.

Conclusion

So my overall message is positive. There are issues on which we do not always see eye-to-eye with China. But we will continue to discuss these in an open and constructive way.

And by promoting practical exchanges and dialogue on any issue which affects us as responsible members of the international community, we are successfully building up new and forward-looking relationships with both Hong Kong and China. We have done what we can to make those relationships complementary in the spirit of 'one country, two systems'. And we will continue to work to make a success of this as we enter the new millennium.

What Is So Special about Democracy?

by

Prof. Amy Gutmann

Kenneth Robinson Fellow

from Laurance S. Rockefeller University, U.S.A.

The International Herald Tribune recently ran a story “With Joyful Optimism... Bali Relishes Democracy”. It read in part: “From the tense streets of Jakarta to the uneasy villages of East Timor, democracy is making unsteady progress in this far-flung Asian country. But here on the tropical island of Bali, democratic-style politics is bursting out with a joyful clamour. People here are exercising their new political freedom with cheerful abandon. ‘This is fun,’ Ketut, a 34-year old auto mechanic in this small coastal town [Sanur] said as he manned a roadside stand festooned with banners for a popular presidential candidate, Megawati Sukarno-putri.”

Democracy is more common in our lifetimes than ever before, but it is not always fun. It is still a highly contested form of government and a highly contested concept. Is democracy just one form of government among many others? Or is there something positively special about it, something that should lead us to expect democracy to become increasingly common as favorable conditions for its development increase around the world?

To answer these questions, we need to consider the meaning of democracy and its relationship to the dominant nondemocratic conception of government. In this lecture, I’ll examine the most common conceptions of democracy: procedural, constitutional, and deliberative. I’ll consider the relationship of the strongest of the three conceptions-deliberative democracy-to the strongest alternative to democracy, rule of experts. I’ll argue that there is something positively special about democracy, something that is rooted in democracy’s core commitments: a commitment to treating human beings as civic equals and therefore to expecting human beings to justify coercive laws and institutions to the people who are bound by them. Only in a democracy are people treated as active subjects and not just as objects of government. Only in a democracy are people expected to take a public and not merely a private perspective on the value of publicly binding laws and institutions.

But why should people who are not public officials care about government when there are so many other important aspects of our lives that command our attention and contribute to our satisfaction in life: our family, our work, our religion, and our recreational activities?

Like all forms of government, democracy offers a way of dealing with disagreement. If people did not disagree and had no temptation to do anything we didn’t all approve, we would not need government. We could simply set up an administration that did what we all agreed needed to be and therefore would be done, and we could get on with our lives. Our lives

would not need to include any component of citizenship. We'd be administered, but not governed. And we'd have no good reason to take an interest in administration unless we had a taste for administration. The eternal vigilance that democracy recommends to all citizens would seem as silly as it was superfluous.

But we-the adult members of every society on the face of this earth-do disagree and we have far more reason to distrust than to trust rulers who are not accountable to us. Being governed entails being told to do something that we might not otherwise agree to do. If there is something special about democracy, it must be tied to its way of dealing with disagreements that arise among people who share a single society but who do not share a single sense of what should be done about all those matters that mutually affect them, and who cannot simply trust their rulers to act in the public interest without mechanisms of public accountability. What, then, is democracy's way of dealing with our disagreements? This question requires us to figure out what kind of government we should take democracy to be.

Let's begin with a simple procedural understanding of democracy: majoritarianism. Even this understanding cannot be very simple if it is to count as even a minimally defensible form of democracy. A procedural democracy must enfranchise all adult members of society. It must hold free, fair, and frequent elections of its public officials. It must secure freedom of speech, press, and association. Otherwise majoritarianism is a sham. Suppose that the minimal conditions of procedural democracy are in place. The citizenry includes all adult members of society. Members of a society are governed by the will of a majority or their accountable representatives. The decision of a majority at any particular time is provisional, since it may always be revised by subsequent majorities; but what the majority decides resolves the moral conflict as a matter of law or policy at any particular time.

What is the strongest justification for majoritarianism? We begin with the sound empirical assumption that people disagree on substantive solutions to many moral conflicts that must be collectively resolved. We add a moral assumption that is widely shared by virtually every moral philosophy: the moral claims of each person should be respected. These two simple assumptions create a problem for democracy understood as majority rule. The problem is that majority rule may not adequately respect the moral claims of individuals. A simple example can clarify the deep moral problem with democracy understood as majoritarianism. Imagine yourself with four other people in a railway car. I'm one of the four other people. None of us can leave, some of us wish to smoke and some of us object to anyone smoking in our presence. How should the conflict be resolved? Majoritarianism has a simple answer: let's vote. The appeal of letting majority preference determines the outcome, as Brian Barry describes it in his essay "Is Democracy Special?" [Democracy, Power and Justice: Essays in Political Theory, Oxford University Press, 1989], is that:

Quite persuasive arguments can be made for saying that the decision should not simply reflect the number of people who want to smoke as against the number who dislike being in the presence of smokers. But, since opposing principles can be advanced, the existence of relevant principles does not seem to offer a sound basis for resistance to a majority decision.

Brian Barry imagines the Archbishop of Canterbury among us, claiming “the right to decide the smoking question on the basis either of his social position or on the basis of his presumptive expertise in casuistry.” If some of us reject his claim, it is difficult to see how the question can be settled except by a vote. If the Archbishop finds himself in the minority, it must be because he has failed to convince enough of us that he is right, or has the right to decide. He may continue to insist that his view should have been accepted, just as a believer in the natural right to smoke may continue to maintain that the others should have accepted his claim. But, in the face of actual rejection of the minority views, the case for deferring to the majority decision looks strong. But the case is not so simple as this example makes it seem. It looks different if we start to introduce some realistic complexity.

Two passengers-you and I-argue as follows: “Nonsmokers should not be subject to the substantial health risks of passive smoking, and smokers are also harming themselves by smoking. So it is in no one’s interests to smoke in this railway car.” The vote is taken, and we, the two health-minded passengers, lose, 3-2. If the health risks are minor and uncertain, the case for majority rule still looks strong. But if you and I have asthma, the risks are likely to be great, and the case for majority rule weakens. Our confidence in majority rule seems to decline as the health risks increase in severity and likelihood.

What does this example help to highlight about the appeal of majority rule? The appeal of majority rule depends on conditions that are rarely satisfied in democratic politics. One condition is a majority must not infringe the vital interests of individuals. If you and I know that we are likely to suffer a severe asthma attack from tobacco smoke, we are surely not bound by a majority decision in favor of smoking. Decisions that violate the vital interests of any citizen cannot be justified simply by virtue of the fact that they result from majority rule or any other generally acceptable procedure. Most procedural democrats accept that procedures should be constrained by some values, but they try to restrict the values to procedural rights that are conditions of the procedure itself: free speech, free press, freedom of association, and universal adult suffrage. These rights are necessary to preserve the democratic process itself.

But if the aim of democracy is to resolve moral conflict as fairly as possible, why limit ourselves to these procedural constraints? The railway car example shows that some decisions consistent with procedural constraints-imposing life-threatening health risks on a few people for the sake of satisfying the preferences of the greater number may not be justified. We

need to see whether democracy in practice can do better than to be purely procedural, but this example suggests that the content of the moral conflict affects the justifiability of the procedure. And the democratic idea that everybody's moral claims should be taken seriously requires us to assess the morality of the claims that people make.

According to proceduralists, majoritarianism can justifiably constrain itself by values internal to the democratic process, such as the value of free speech and universal suffrage. Proceduralists offer no good reason why we should not also try to find a form of democracy that constrains itself to respect equally important and legitimate moral claims of individuals: what I call their basic liberty or integrity. If democracy is special because it tries to respect the moral claims of every individual, then the most defensible understanding of democracy will be the one that takes the moral claims of individuals as seriously as they can be taken. A democracy should be designed, if possible, so that majority rule is not authorized to overrule the basic liberty or integrity of individuals. Democracy will be more defensible to the extent that majority rule is constrained or constrains itself to respect the basic liberty and integrity of individuals.

But how can a democratic process be so constrained? Let's consider the railway car example once again, and modify slightly. Suppose you are a doctor and have specialized knowledge about the health risks of smoking. I, who have no specialized knowledge and am undecided about whether smoking should be permitted in the car, want to hear more from you about the pros and cons of the issue before I vote. And I want other people to hear what you have to say as well. No one objects to majority rule as the ultimate decision making rule, but you and I object to the idea of simply taking a vote. We both think it important to discuss the substance of the question before anyone casts a vote. Purely procedural principles such as majority rule are silent about an aspect of decision making that often is of critical moral importance in politics: the nature of the evidence, arguments, and claims that are made public before people vote. It would be a serious mistake to judge democracy simply by its voting rules and not by the way the democracy is designed and citizens are (or are not) encouraged to deliberate about disagreements before voting.

When we judge how special democracy is, we should pay attention to what kind of discussions take place, who engage in them, the quality of their arguments, and whether and how people respond to each other. Deliberation is an indispensable part of any democratic process that seeks justifiable resolutions to moral disagreements. Deliberation is indispensable for democracy for at least two important reasons. One is an instrumental moral reason: deliberation increases the chances of arriving at morally good outcomes. The second is an intrinsic moral reason: by their willingness and ability to deliberate, democratic citizens and public officials demonstrate mutual respect among civic equals, which is what democracy is all about. Procedural democracy does not so much reject as it neglects deliberation. Proceduralists seek to resolve moral disagreement mainly by avoiding it:

they forget about how instrumentally and morally important it is for people with power to give reasons to the other people who will be bound by their controversial decisions.

Some majority decisions are not morally acceptable because they violate the basic liberties or opportunities of individuals, for example, by restricting the religious freedom of a minority. A morally defensible conception of democracy must go beyond proceduralism and make room for moral judgements not only of procedures but of their results. By adding a constitutional dimension to democracy, constitutional democrats make democracy more defensible. A constitutional democracy invokes both procedural and substantive values—such as protection of basic liberties and opportunities—to resolve political disagreements.

Constitutional democracy is an improvement over purely procedural democracy. But it does not go far enough in the direction of explicitly taking moral disagreements seriously. In invoking both kinds of values, democracy opens itself up to even more disagreement. Consider the basic liberties of the person. What does protecting the basic liberties of individuals require in practice? To answer this question, let's go back into the railway car. Suppose you and I vote against smoking. We both have asthma. The majority votes to permit smoking. Does this count as violating our basic liberty and opportunity or protecting the basic liberty and opportunity of smokers, or neither? Is our basic liberty and opportunity violated if smoking that is permitted causes either of us to get moderately sick? Or only if it causes us to get violently ill? Or to die?

These questions about what constitutes our basic liberties and opportunities have direct parallels in actual politics. Do public policies that limit environmental pollution protect or violate basic liberty? How much pollution is so much that it violates a basic liberty? I hasten to note that the problem is not that we need more facts about the risks and the consequences of pollution to answer this question. Information is important, but even with perfect information someone would still have to decide what risks to impose, and whether and why a certain level of risk violates basic liberty. Constitutional democracy gives priority to basic liberty and opportunity. We still should expect wide differences of reasonable opinion about many important issues concerning basic liberty and opportunity. Do our basic liberties include: the legalization or prohibition of violent pornography, prostitution, polygamy, abortion, addictive drugs, and capital punishment? Do our basic opportunities include certain welfare rights, rights to health care, education, and police protection? If so, how much and by whom should they be provided?

We should expect indeterminacy about these issues in grand theories of constitutional democracy, like John Rawls's theory of justice. But we should also defend a kind of democracy that supports the best possible public deliberation about such issues. Questions about the legalization or prohibition of pornography, prostitution, polygamy, abortion, addictive drugs, and capital punishment, questions about the level of health care,

education, and police protection that are owed to citizens, these are not beyond justice but about justice as it affects the lives of most citizens. Whether a government resolves these issues by hearing what its citizens have to say about these issues, by offering us good reasons for the decisions, and by remaining open to changing its decisions when better evidence and arguments come to light is terribly important. Theories of constitutional democracy that neglect the importance of public deliberation about controversial issues suffer from a similar deliberative deficit as procedural theories.

A deliberative conception of democracy supplements a constitutional conception by supporting deliberation about controversial issues-about which people can reasonably disagree-by supporting educational institutions that not only inform citizens about politics but also encourage citizens to discuss political issues with one another. Democratic politics is special to the extent that it enfranchises all adults, protects freedom of speech, press, and association, and secures a set of basic liberties and opportunities as rights. But rights are not enough. We cannot count on our ancestors to have handed down to us the uniquely correct set of rights. Democracy will also be special to the extent that its citizens achieve a higher degree of political competence and maintain a more stable commitment to justice than alternative forms of government.

Political competence and moral commitment cannot be broadly sustained unless citizens are encouraged to understand and to evaluate their laws and public policies, to articulate what they think about public matters, and to justify what they think to their fellow citizens who are mutually bound by the same laws and public policies. Moral and political philosophers cannot in advance establish standards specific enough for political decision making. All the more reason for us to defend a process of political decision making that is informed by the experience of a shared political life, and inspired by a commitment to collective moral deliberation.

An important part of what makes democracy special is its capacity for collective moral deliberation that aims as far as possible to justify laws and policies to the people who will be bound by them. A democracy that is faithful to its premise of civic equality and its aspiration for social justice must defend moral deliberation within its everyday politics, where legislators, executives, administrators, judges, and many other public officials make and apply public policy. This is what Dennis Thompson and I [in *Democracy and Disagreement*] call middle democracy and deliberation is at least as important in middle democracy as it is in the highest courts of the land.

If deliberation is so important, a critic of deliberative democracy asks, why do I defend such an imperfect and imperfectible kind of moral deliberation, deliberation among the masses rather than among an educated elite? Deliberation is certainly not easy. Would it not be morally better-and more realistic-to defend deliberation among only those members of a society who are most educated and most adept at deliberation? Some constitutional democrats are deliberative elitists. They recognize the importance of extensive moral deliberation within one but only political institution in the

United States-the Supreme Court. They argue that judges should interpret constitutional principles by engaging in moral deliberation. They suggest that legislatures and citizens more generally should defer to judges.

But this critique of more widespread democratic deliberation in defense of judicial elitism is internally inconsistent. The judicial process itself is very imperfect. Judges disagree morally ; they are not well educated in making moral arguments. Most judges do not even agree that morality is relevant to the process of judicial interpretation. Judges often reach the wrong conclusion. Many judicial opinions are poorly argued. Defenders of constitutionalism do not take any of these facts to be a reason to diminish the role of deliberation among judges. They are right; none of these facts is a good reason to diminish the role of deliberation among judges. Quite the contrary : When we see that good argument has failed to carry sufficient weight in the judicial process, we have all the more reason to urge more deliberation and find ways of creating greater incentives for judges to deliberate well. The same is true for the rest of the democratic process.

Deliberation among an elite is better than no deliberation, but better still is justifying coercive laws and public policies not only among an elite but also to the people who are bound by those laws and policies. Those people are not only the elite. And those people are not given the chance to disagree with the decisions of the elite. What could possibly justify binding the vast majority of people to the decision of an elite that is not accountable to the very people whose lives and life chances they are determining?

The Platonic answer is still the strongest challenge to the idea that democracy is special in a positive sense. The elite's greater competence-their talent and expertise, or what Plato called "techne"-gives them the right to rule. "All arguments for exclusive rule, all anti-democratic arguments, if they are serious," Michael Walzer writes in *Spheres of Justice* [Basic Books, 1983], "are arguments from special knowledge. Just as we buy our shoes from a craftsman skilled in shoe-making so we should receive our laws from a craftsman skilled in ruling."

In the *Republic*, Plato imagines a democratic ship as opposed to a ship steered by a skilled pilot or helmsman. In the democratic ship, as Plato tells us, "The sailors are quarreling over the control of the helm; each thinks he ought to be steering the vessel, though he has never learned navigation and cannot point to any teacher under whom he has served his apprenticeship; what is more, they assert that navigation is a thing that cannot be taught at all, and are ready to tear to pieces anyone who says it can."

We surely would not want to be on such a ship. The same is true, Plato suggests, of the ship of state. When democratic citizens quarrel over who should control the government, and where to steer it, they put themselves and everyone else in danger. They would be wise to let the state be steered by person who has special knowledge of how political power is supposed to be exercised.

The more we study politics, however, the more problematic Plato's

analogy becomes. The pilot of a ship doesn't choose the port. His technical skill is largely irrelevant to the choice of a destination. The cobbler doesn't decide to repair your shoes. You decide that your shoes need to be repaired, and you can find a technically proficient cobbler to repair them without yourself being technically proficient. Technical knowledge is very important for politics, but it does not determine what counts as the most justifiable ends. Politicians, like pilots and cobblers, need to be authorized by, and accountable to, the people who are most affected by the laws and policies that are made in the name of the people. Laws and policies that bind the people need to be justified to the people. If people are to be treated as civic equals, they must have the authority to hold politicians accountable for the success or failure of their justifications. Similarly, the passengers on a ship hold the pilot accountable for getting them safely to the port of their choice.

All democratic destinations are not therefore equally good. If they were, there would be no need for democratic deliberation. Citizens could simply vote, with or without information, with or without an adequate education, with or without moral motivation. Deliberative democracy is more valuable than non-deliberative democracy in part because deliberation makes a positive difference in the quality of outcomes. Democrats therefore need to support the social conditions that conduce to more and better deliberation: a good educational system, a responsible media, a robust set of secondary associations, and political institutions that encourage deliberation over time. Deliberation over time-what I call "reiterated deliberation"-contains the means of its own correction. Majorities are obligated to offer reasons to dissenting minorities; minorities are given a fair chance of persuading majorities of the justice of their position. A bad decision is more readily exposed and corrected during the next round of deliberation and decision making.

But the value of deliberation does not reside wholly or even primarily in justice of the policies it produces. The hard choices that governments make under conditions of scarcity are more legitimate the more that claims are considered on their merits, rather on the basis of wealth, status, or power. Moral justifications help sustain political legitimacy by demonstrating mutual respect among people who share a society on moral terms, even if those terms do not, since they cannot, satisfy everyone. Living civilly with one another amidst moral disagreement is a value in itself. Deliberative democracy is also valuable because it creates forums in which we are encouraged to take a broader perspective on questions of public policy. John Stuart Mill presented one of the earliest and still most cogent accounts of such a process [in *Considerations on Representative Government*]. Mill argued that participating in political discussion, a citizen is called upon to weigh interests not his own; to be guided, in case of conflicting claims, by another rule than this private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles and maxims which have for their reason of existence the common good...

We are more likely to take a broader view of issues, to consider the

claims of more people, in a process that takes moral arguments seriously than in one where assertions of self-interest or political power prevail. Deliberation can help us better understand the moral seriousness of the views we oppose, and better cooperate with citizens who hold these views. The practice of mutual respect amidst ongoing disagreement may be the most essential element of deliberative democracy.

Democrats therefore should add deliberation to the set of values that are essential to a political ideal. Is deliberative democracy the best form of government here and now for all societies? Not necessarily. Deliberative democracy is not a realistic alternative under some social and economic conditions. But deliberative democracy is special because it remains a moral ideal to be approached because it and only it is dedicated to the idea that laws, policies, and institutions that are coercive—as are the laws and policies, and institutions of politics—need to be justified to the people who are bound by them. When people in power do not need to justify their decisions to those who are affected by them, they are denying the demands of democracy and democratic deliberation.

Deliberation without democracy is dangerous; so is democracy without deliberation. Both deliberation without democracy and democracy without deliberation threaten society with the corruption that unaccountable power cultivates. In the case of deliberation without democracy, majorities are threatened by the unaccountable power of the minority. In the case of democracy without deliberation, minorities are threatened with the unaccountable power of the majority. We can do better. But only if we strive for both a deliberative and democratic government.

I therefore conclude that deliberative democracy is so special because it speaks to our ever increasing need for more mutual and moral understanding in the conduct of our increasingly mutual affairs. The need is greater today, in our interdependent and diverse societies, than it has ever been before. We should not be surprised therefore if deliberative democracy becomes an increasingly popular conception of politics and democracy spreads even further across the globe, putting nondemocratic forms of government and nondeliberative forms of democracy increasingly on the defensive. Deliberative democracy is an aspiration that speaks to our capacity to live together with mutual respect amidst ongoing disagreement.

The Making of an Impressive Speech

by

Prof. Vincent Leung

Hon. President of Swire Scholars' Association, Hong Kong

Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen:

You know I am a very humble man. I know only too well that to make a speech on speeches I am running the risk of tarnishing my humble image, an image I treasure very dearly. However, over the years many of my friends, colleagues and former students, who have heard my speeches, have expressed their wish to share my knowledge in the techniques of making speeches. As many of you know, I am not a talented speaker. To make a speech on speeches will be one of the biggest challenges in my life. Nevertheless I am not shrinking away from the challenge and it has always been my intention to take up the challenge some day when I have accumulated more experience in making speeches. In other words, when I am older. Although I have already been old for some time, I have always been misled by my kind-hearted friends who keep on telling me that I can still pass for a handsome young man. That is of course a myth, a myth which I was glad to believe in. So I was living in a dream and I kept living and behaving like a young man until one fine day last year. On going into a departmental store, a salesgirl call me 亞伯, the equivalent of "uncle" in English. For a brief moment, my heart sank. That remark, ladies and gentlemen, changed my life. I realized that among other things, I should give the seminar on making speeches without further delay. If I wait till I look like a granduncle, no one will come to listen to me.

Ladies and gentlemen:

Before I go on to the topic of the seminar and before I forget, let me thank the Swire Scholars' Association and the University of Hong Kong for holding this seminar. Talking about Swire Scholars, actually I have a confession to make. For the last 6 years, I have forced each resident Swire Scholar to volunteer to give a seminar in the Robert Black College. Today, to be fair to them, I am forcing myself to volunteer to give this seminar. My sincere thanks go to the executive committee members of the Swire Association and in particular to its Hon. Secretary, Dr. Wong Chun Hung, and his newly-wed wife, Margaret, for their help in producing the video presentations. Let me also thank everyone of you for coming along to support the seminar. I know that 15 minutes ago, you have just dropped your unfinished work on your desks to come here. I am deeply touched by your support and your presence is a great encouragement to me.

Talented Speakers

Are there any talented speakers in this room? Come on, don't be shy. You don't have to worry. I am not going to ask you to come out and show

your talent on the stage. Any talented speaker? No? It seems that you and I have something in common - it seems that none of us has any talent in making speeches, so we are all in the same boat and it is a case of the blind leading the blind. Well, I am feeling a little bit more comfortable now that I have found out that there is no talented speaker in the room to contradict me on what I am going to say. Talking about talented speakers, let us look at a couple of great orators in the world, one past and one present. Anyone recognises the photo on the screen? Yes, you are right, he is Adolf Hitler. Most of you in the room are too young to have experienced the second world war. As an old timer, I have experienced the war and I have heard Adolf Hitler speaking on radio as the leader of Germany. Sixty years ago, while his army conquered half of Europe his moving speeches captured the mind of every German. Look how he hypnotised his audience by his speech. Here is another great orator. Anyone recognises the photo on the screen? Yes, you are right, she is Mrs. Imelda Marcos. Mrs. Marcos is famous not only for possessing 3,000 pairs of high-heel shoes, but also for possessing a magnetic tongue. Look how her audience was being attracted by her magnetic tongue.

Ladies and gentlemen:

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not one of the admirers of these orators. All I am saying is that they are very talented speakers. Please note also I have chosen a male orator and a female orator as examples to show that I am not a male chauvinist. The fact that there are more male orators than female orators recorded in history does not mean that men are more gifted in speech making than women. It has only resulted from the fact that women have had less opportunities to develop their speaking talents due to historical and social circumstances. Mark my words, time is changing and changing fast. As a man I must consider myself very lucky to have lived a good part of my life in the good old times. There are a number of professions that require talent in making speeches. We have people like government and community leaders: politicians, lawyers, comedians, news commentators, talk-show stars, fortune tellers, etc. For those people making speeches is part of their lives. For others like most of us who are not in these professions, whether we are talented speakers or not, we still have the need to make speeches from time to time. For example, we have to make verbal presentations in our careers and we have to make social speeches like welcome speeches, farewell speeches, congratulation speeches, introduction speeches and toasts at parties, etc. I shall now put forward to you my observations on how we can impress the audience with our speeches. As many of you know, the Chinese translation of the word “speech” is 演講. The two Chinese words separately mean “act” and “talk”. It follows therefore that to make a speech is to perform a talking show.

Opening Remarks

As a speaker you are an actor on stage performing a talking show. You have to do some acting while you talk to attract the attention of your audience.

As part of your talking show, you can smile and show your charm to the audience or you can show your grace and beauty, if you have any. All these are parts of your act as a speaker. When you begin your speech, the mind of the audience is usually in a disoriented state: some are talking to their friends sitting next to them, some are in deep thought and others are half asleep. Your first few words must therefore serve as a wake-up call. One good way to catch the attention of a mentally-disorganised audience is to say something which catches the audience by total surprise.

Ladies and gentlemen :

By the way, do you remember my opening remark at this seminar? Well, here it is again: “I am a very humble man.” Of course my opening remarks could have been “good evening, welcome to the seminar, thank you, etc.” but I chose to surprise you by declaring that I am a very humble man. Hopefully that sentence would be more effective to catch your attention. You see, I can always say : “thank you” and “welcome” later in my speech. Let me give you two more examples of opening remarks which I have used to surprise the audience and to catch their attention : One day, as the host of a dinner party with many of VIP guests, the first sentence in my opening speech was: “Look who have come to dinner tonight” On another occasion, as the guest speaker at a dinner party, the opening remarks of my speech was: “As I was walking into the dining room, I had a heated argument with our host”

Moving or Entertaining

Ladies and gentlemen :

Having caught the attention of your audience, you should now try to retain its attention throughout your speech. You will succeed if your speech impresses the audience. An impressive speech may be defined as either a moving speech or an entertaining speech. To make a moving speech you say the words which touch the hearts of your audience. You arouse their love, hatred, sympathy, pity, enthusiasm, etc. so that your feeling and the feeling of the audience are melted in one single pot. The whole audience will be in resonance with you. Personally, I think that a moving speech is an impressive speech of the highest order. But to make a moving speech, you need a cause or an emotional issue to speak on.

I must confess that I have not made any moving speeches. The nearest thing to making a moving speech for me was when I borrowed some moving words from Sir Winston Churchill in the following example: At my first faculty board meeting as dean of engineering and architecture, my opening remarks were: “Ladies and gentlemen, I know I have neither the prestige nor the wisdom of all my predecessors. All I have to offer to the Faculty is my blood, toil, sweat and tears”. Since we seldom have the causes for making moving speeches, I shall leave the subject and move on to talk about making entertaining speeches. By the way, those of you who wish to learn about making moving speeches can pay attention to the speeches made by famous politicians. You can also get your inspiration

from speeches made at funerals.

Normally, in listening to a speech, the audience wants to be entertained and they look forward to enjoying the speech. An entertaining speech is one which is full of humour plus possibly one or two jokes. For the next few minutes, I shall speak on humour and on humour in a speech. In the Chinese culture and tradition, we had jokes, but we did not really have humour. The Chinese words 幽默 is a phonetic translation of the English word “humour”. By the way, a joke is a funny story whereas humour is a funny way to express oneself verbally or in writing. Last week, when an Canadian visitor heard that I was going to make a speech on “The Making of an Impressive Speech”, her immediate reaction was to ask me: “Is it going to be humorous?” You see, in the Anglo-Saxon culture, an impressive speech is equated to a humorous speech.

Ladies and gentlemen :

Many years ago, like many of you in the room today, I was a fresh graduate, but unlike you, I was very hard up and I lived in the U.K. I saved up one month’s pocket money and spent it on an admission ticket to attend my first Annual Dinner of the Institution of Electrical Engineers. As a fresh electrical engineering graduate, I wanted to see what such an annual dinner was like. At the dinner, there was a Guest of Honours, Mr. Chatterway, who was to give an after-dinner speech. Mr. Chatterway was a famous runner who had just won an Olympic gold medal for England. So he was a national sports hero, well-known to the audience. Before he spoke, I was wondering what this famous runner had to say on electrical engineering. I thought perhaps he would tell us how he won his Olympic gold medal. To my surprise, Mr. Chatterway did not speak a single word on electrical engineering, nor did he speak a single word on how he won his Olympic gold medal. Instead, he made an extremely humorous speech. He made fun of people in the audience and on current events in the news. Almost every sentence in his speech produced a laugh from the audience. At the end of his speech, he was given a standing ovation. It was truly an extremely impressive speech. That was my first encounter of a humorous speech and it left a very deep impression on me.

Ladies and gentlemen :

You know I am very slow in my reaction and responses but time was on my side. It tooks me many years to gradually acquire certain techniques for putting humour into my speeches. I shall now share some of these techniques with you. In a speech you normally have a message to deliver to the audience. The quality of your speech is not measured by the message. The message is relatively unimportant because everybody has more or less expected what your message would be before you give it to them. It is the way you deliver the message that will determine the quality of your speech.

Preparation

The point I really want to make is that to make our speeches humorous

and therefore impressive, we have to give a lot of thought to what to say. That brings me to the importance of making preparation for our speeches. You know some people can just stand up and make an impromptu or unprepared speech. These are very exceptional people. Even these exceptional people can make improvements on their impromptu speeches if they prepare their speeches beforehand. Prof. Wang Gungwu, our former Vice-Chancellor, is well known for his eloquence in making speeches. I once asked him whether he made any preparation for his speeches. The answer was a definite “yes”. He told me he gave a lot of thought on every speech before he made it although he appeared to be speaking unprepared. We should prepare our speeches well and prepare them in good time so that we have sufficient time to reflect on them and polish them before they are made. As an untalented speaker, I always (or almost always) draft my speeches before I make them. By drafting a speech you can make sure that the speech has the right length which is also an important factor in the quality of the speech. If you are given the time slot for your speech, try to adhere to the time given to you. You can turn a good speech into a bad speech if you just drag on and on making the audience impatient. If you are not given a time slot for your speech, the best guide for you to decide on the length of your speech is to use the following English motto which says and I quote : “The length of a speech is like the length of a skirt of a young lady. It should be short enough to be interesting and long enough to cover the essential parts.”

Ladies and gentlemen :

I shall leave you to ponder on the interpretation of the English motto and move on to talk more about making our speeches humorous. Since it is your intention to make your speech entertaining in order to make your audience laugh you must try to appear to be talking personally to each and every person in the audience. A speech is essentially a monologue, i.e. talk by one side to many people in an impersonal way. It is necessary for you to turn the monologue into a dialogue so that you appear to be engaged in a conversation with the audience. To do so, a speaker should keep on using such words like: I, me, my, we, us, our, you, your, etc. The words “ladies and gentlemen” should also be used again and again in your speech to precede any paragraph whose first sentence contains the words, “you” or “I”. I presume everyone has heard of the great Roman Emperor, Julius Caesar. Yes? Well when he was a young man trying to establish himself, he had to speak in the streets to persuade people to support him. The first sentence he often used in his speeches was: “Romans, lend me your ears”. Notice the words, “Me” and “Your” in his sentence.

Humour in Speeches

In making a speech humorous the speaker has to make fun on someone the audience knows, such as the speaker himself/herself, the host, the function chairman, well-known personalities in society, VIP’s in the audience, the entire or part of the audience, news makers, world and community leaders. If you make fun on yourself, you should tease yourself or make a fool of yourself. Everyone will get a good laugh when they hear the speaker has

got himself into an embarrassing situation. That would be humour with good taste. On the other hand, if you flatter the audience, the audience will also love it. Your aim in acting as a humorous speaker is to make the audience happy. By the way, there is no point to make fun on someone unknown to the audience because the audience will not find it amusing. The next question is what should we make fun about to make our speeches humorous. There is a list of subjects which will provide good materials for making humorous speeches. I think the funniest subjects are : seniority in position and society, pun, man/woman relationship, age, money, etc. But you can also make fun on misunderstanding, mistakes, contradiction, culture, politics and religion. Incidentally, a pun is the humorous use of words which have more than one meanings. For the moment, I shall give you a couple of examples of humour on seniority and pun. Many years ago, at a dinner party, I was seated next to the Governor of Hong Kong, Sir David Wilson. The price I paid for the honoured seat was that I had to make a speech. In my speech, I said, and I quote: "Ladies and gentlemen, In the hierarchy in Hong Kong, I am only a small potato. Tonight as a small potato I feel ill at ease sitting next to a big potato.....". The audience burst into laughter. The news of my description of the then Hong Kong Governor as a big potato soon spread beyond the dinner party. He was referred to in the elite circles in Hong Kong as the big potato for the next twelve months.

More recently, at another social function, the dining room was full of VIP's including some from China. I was put on the spot by the organizer to be the first speaker. In my speech, I said, and I quote: "Ladies and gentlemen, Before you come to the wrong conclusion, let me hasten to clarify that while I am the first person to speak, I am by no means one of the heavy weights in tonight's gathering. I am only providing you with the od'heuve, and you will shortly see the heavy weight speakers when they will provide you with the main course." Again the audience got a good laugh and I have managed to avoid offending the VIP's who made speeches after me. It is a good rule to humble yourself, and it is another good rule to praise your audience. Believe me, the audience loves to have a humble speaker because it is good for their ego. I must confess that my vocabulary in English or for that matter in any language, is so limited that I seldom use puns in my speeches. But I can tell you one occasion on which I did use a pun. Speaking to a British audience, after describing how great Britain was, I said, and I quote: "Britain is such a great country that we all call it Great Britain."

Ladies and gentlemen :

If you cannot put in enough humour in your speech, you can consider including one or two jokes in your speech. You must have heard many jokes in your lives and I am sure that you will be hearing many more. Try to remember the good jokes you have heard and put them in your joke bank. When an occasion for you to speak arises, pick a joke from your joke bank most relevant to the occasion - for example a religious joke at a Christmas party or a cultural joke in an international social gathering, etc. Before you

reproduce a joke at a party, try to improve on it first. The joke will be much more funny if you put yourself into the joke. For example, you can be the **SUFFERER** of an embarrassing misunderstanding, you can be the **MAKER** of a silly mistake, you can be the **PERSON** who is involved in a cultural, political or religious dispute or you can be the **EYE-WITNESS** to an amusing incident. Events in your ordinary-day lives are usually not very funny. But if you modify them a little, dramatise them a little, exaggerate them a little or even scandalise them a little (after all, they are only jokes), you will become an inventor of amusing jokes. A joke is essentially a story. In telling a joke as part of your speech, you are actually telling a story. Usually only one laugh is produced at the end of a joke. Jokes are therefore much less efficient than humour as an agent to amuse an audience. In general, short jokes are preferable to long jokes because the audience does not have to wait so long before they burst into laughter at the end of a short joke.

While a humorous speech is more impressive than a speech filled with jokes, spontaneous humour in response to what goes on in the room or to remarks made by previous speakers is even more impressive to the audience because you have demonstrated that you have quick wit. You are impressive because only a highly intelligent person possesses quick wit. For those of you in the room who have quick wit, there is no difficulty for you to produce spontaneous humour. But for the rest of you like myself who are not quick witted, I shall tell you the secret to produce “spontaneous” humour in the following example. As a speaker, when you see a small audience in the room, your humorous response to the situation can be : “I am very happy to see a small audience today. You see, a big audience would make me very nervous.” Let us now reverse the situation. As a speaker, when you see a large audience in the room, your humorous response to the situation can be : “ I am very happy to see a large audience today. You see, a small audience would make me lose face.” In making a humorous response to the situation you are in, you give the impression to the audience that you are in possession of quick wit.

Techniques

Ladies and gentlemen :

I shall now turn to the techniques of speech making in general for a moment. Those of you who have attended classes or taken courses on speech making may have been told to use simple words in your speeches. The reason given is that difficult words may take the audience some moment to grasp their meaning and in the meantime they lose their attention to what you say following your difficult words. There is a grain of truth in this theory. I think we should choose the words to be used in our speech in accordance with the level of education of audience. Personally, I would first take a close look at my audience and prepare my speech accordingly. What I am trying to say is that for a sophisticated audience like you in this room today I feel very comfortable to use sophisticated words in my speech.

Although simple words are easily understood, their meaning may not be very precise. Take the example of the following two sentences:

“I am uncomfortable.” and “I feel ill at ease.”

“Uncomfortable” is a simple word that can be readily understood. It can be used to substitute for “ill at ease”, but the substitute meaning is not very precise. When speaking to a sophisticated audience, by all means use sophisticated words and phrases. Your good command of the language will be appreciated.

Ladies and gentlemen :

Again, those of you who have taken courses on speech making may have been told to use short sentences in preference to long sentences in your speeches. The argument is that if you use long sentences, some in the audience may have difficulty in connecting the first part and the last part of your long sentence in their mind. Again, there is a grain of truth in this theory. The problem is that if you use short sentences only in your speech, it gives the impression that your knowledge of the language is only at the primary school level. I think that we should use both long and short sentences in our speeches. However, unlike in a written article, the pronouns in the latter part of a long sentence in a speech should be replaced by the nouns they represent to make sure that the audience have not forgotten what these pronouns represent. In other words, in a long sentence in your speech avoid using the pronouns, “they, he, she.....” towards the end of a long sentence and repeat the use of the nouns they represent. As a general rule it will make your speech more colourful and perhaps more impressive to the audience if you will quote one or two relevant old sayings or proverbs in your speech. If you don’t know many English proverbs, use Chinese proverbs. You should not have any problem because it has been said that there is a Chinese proverb on every subject under the sun. Certain verses in some popular poems and daily-used idioms can also be taken as proverbs and put into your speech. Again, you can modify a proverb slightly to make it relevant to your speech.

I shall now say a few words on the delivery of speeches. Everyone, or almost everyone, feel a bit nervous before he gets on to the stage. This is known as stage fright. Not to worry, your confidence will return as soon as you begin to speak. Unless your speech is very short or you have made it repeatedly to other audiences before, you will probably need a note in your hand, hidden or otherwise. Since we want to appear to be engaged with our audience in a dialogue, we have to try to keep our eyes on the audience. Glancing at your note should therefore be kept to a minimum though it may be easier said than done. One way to reduce the need to glance at your note is to arrange the order of your topics in a sequence so that the end of one topic naturally leads to the beginning of the next. Another way is to use one common word in the last sentence of one paragraph and in the first sentence of the following paragraph so that one paragraph leads smoothly to the next paragraph. The delivery of a speech will inevitably include facial expres-

sions as well as gestures of the hands. The facial expression of a speaker may show his/her joy or grief. A good speaker makes hand gestures to stress a point. I think we can take our lessons by watching facial expressions and hand gestures of famous speakers on the TV screen. I have noticed on the TV screen that some famous TV news commentators move their heads slightly up like this at the beginning of every other sentence. I guess some movement of your head in a speech is better than no movement at all.

Cultural Differences

In recent years, there is a tendency that more and more speeches are made in Chinese in Hong Kong. I must confess that I have not made many speeches in Chinese. Many of you are probably much more qualified than I am to speak on the subject of making speeches in Chinese. According to my own observation, speeches in Chinese are more serious and therefore less humorous than speeches in English. If you want to receive response from your audience, shouting key sentences is the name of the game. When you shout your welcome to the guests, the audience will clap their hands. When you shout your toasts, again the audience will clap their hands. The applauses are to be taken as to say : “Thank you for your welcome,” and “we join you in your toast” respectively by the audience who may not necessarily be impressed by your speech.

Because of cultural differences, humour in one culture may not necessarily be humour in another culture. Talking about cultural differences, it reminds me of some experiences in the Robert Black College of which I am the Master. You may know the College provides accommodation for overseas academic visitors and for a number of overseas and local graduate students. One morning, a local girl graduate resident came into my office. She appeared to be in a state of fear and anxiety. She asked me if the College was a safe place to live in. I said yes and asked her why. She said, “At the dance party in the College last night, I tried to be polite and accepted an invitation to dance with a stranger from Europe. In our first dance, he asked for my room number and telephone number and he even tried to kiss me. You know he was in such a hurry (禽禽青). I feel very unsafe living in the College”. On another occasion, an Western young girl resident came to my office one morning and asked me to recommend a psychiatrist for her to see. I asked her what is the matter with her. She said, “I have already been living in the College for a whole week. During the entire week, none of the local young male residents in the College has taken me out on a date. I feel so distressed and depressed. I need to see a psychiatrist. I have lost my self confidence and I am beginning to worry that there might be something wrong with me as a woman.” Ladies and gentlemen: That is what I mean by cultural differences. Cultural differences have to be handled with the greatest of care when we make speeches. What is white in one culture may appear to be black in another.

Inducement

Ladies and gentlemen :

You have probably seen the photo in the poster announcing today’s semi-

nar . I suppose some of you were induced to the seminar and would like to find out what did the people in the photo actually hear that made them laugh so full-heartedly. I thought the seminar will not be complete until I have provided you with the answer to the question. Well, the photo shows the audience listening to my speech made at the 75th Anniversary Dinner of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Hong Kong some years ago. I was the last speaker at the end of a very long dinner party. My opening remarks to a tired audience were:

“Ladies and gentlemen :

All our honoured guests tonight are great men and women. I know that as great men and women, each of you think that you yourself are the greatest of them all. As you know, in a banquet like this, the order in which the names of the guests are called out by a speaker is an indication of the order of greatness of the guests. I am not calling out your names tonight because I want to leave my order of your greatness to your own imagination. Yesterday, when the dean offered me a five-minute time slot to speak during tonight’s function, I was so excited. You see, I have never spoken to such a distinguished audience before in all my life. So, I immediately accepted the offer. It was not until a moment ago when the dean introduced me as the oldest member in the engineering faculty that I realised that I have paid a very heavy price for the five-minute time slot he has given me. It is much dearer in fact than five-minute prime time on the TVB. Frankly, I have never been so embarrassed in all my life. Now that the myth of my youth is finally broken, and my image in the University and indeed in the society at large has been shattered, I can foresee steady decline of my popularity with the fairer sex. What a prospect! Incidentally, my wife, Jane, is not with me here this evening. But when I return home and tell her how the dean introduced me, she will be able to sleep more soundly tonight

Finally, ladies and gentlemen : When you make preparation for a humorous speech, remember : “ASK NOT WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY. ASK (yourself) WHAT THE AUDIENCE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR.”

Photographs of Speakers

*Guest Night Speakers
1995-1996*



Mr. Paulus S. Lee



Dr. E. W. Brand

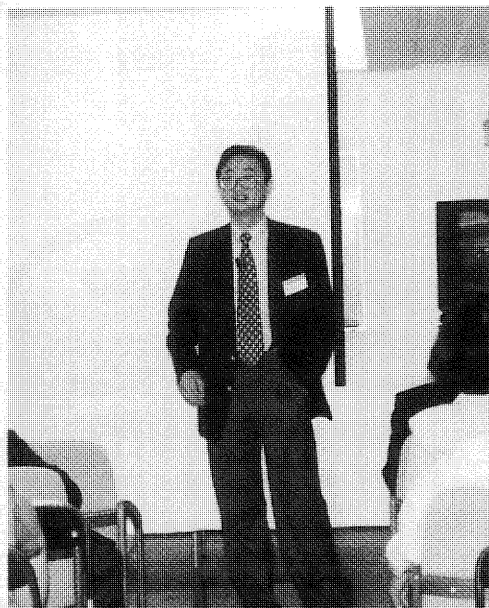


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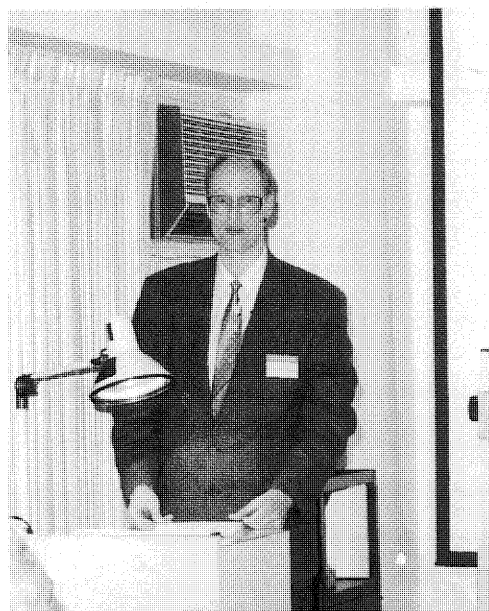
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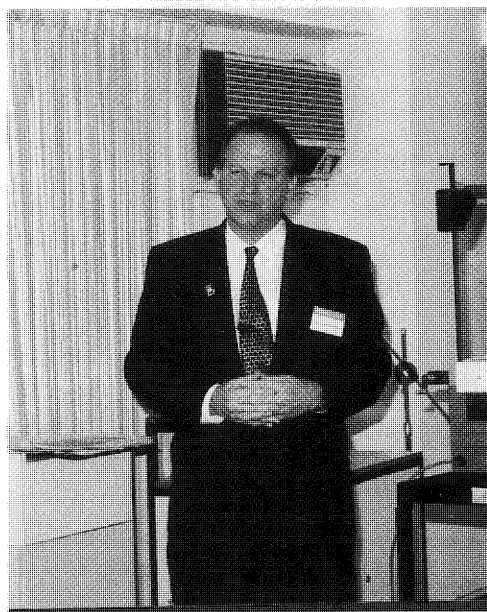
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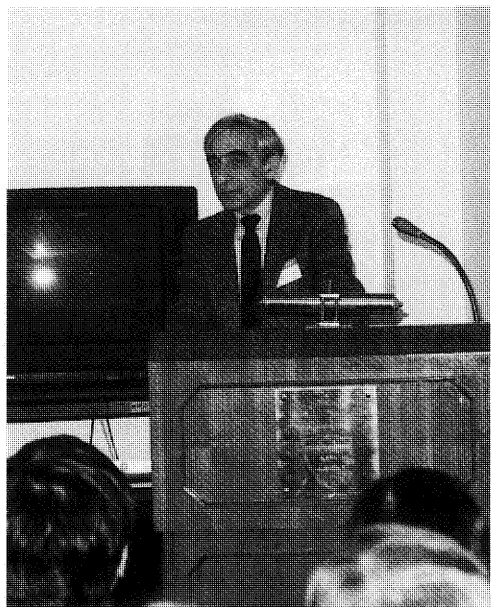


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Prof. M. Dickman

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Prof. Michael Walzer



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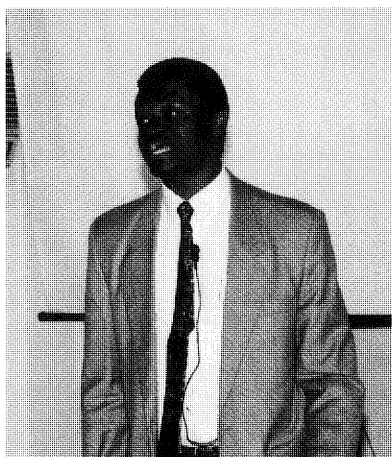


Prof. Peter Wesley-Smith

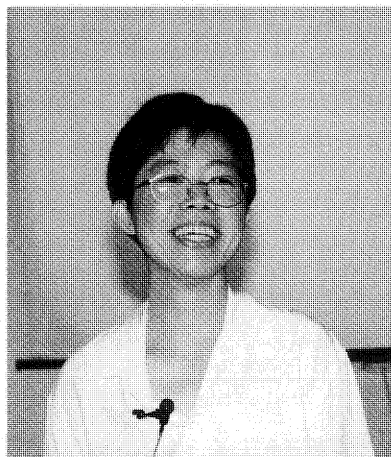


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Ms. Yee Lai Wan



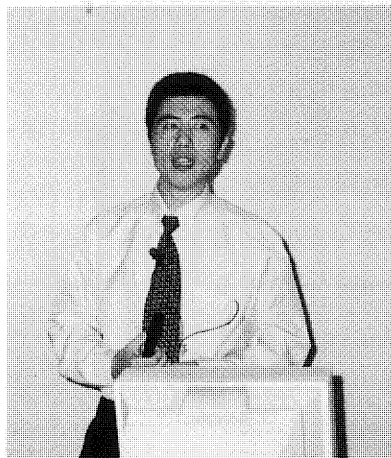
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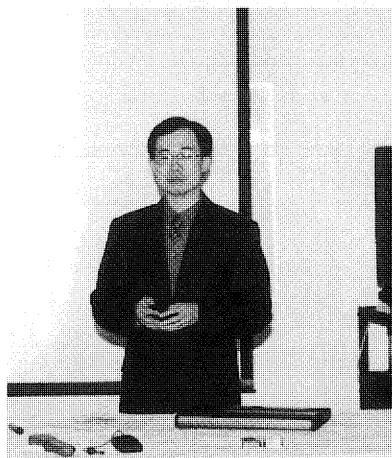
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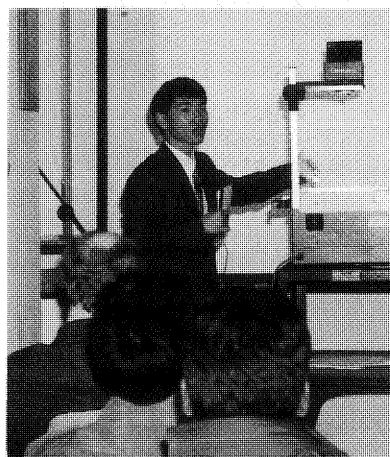
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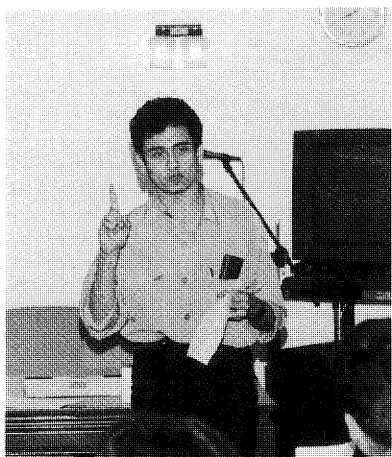


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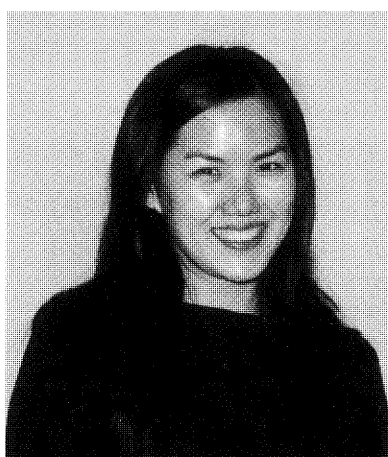


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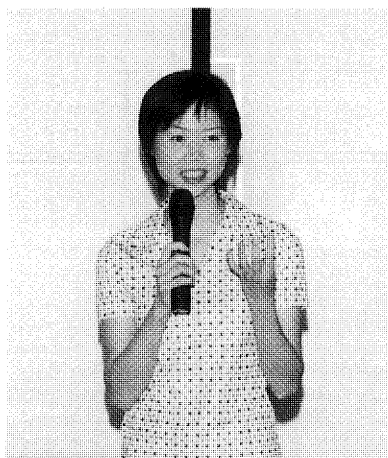
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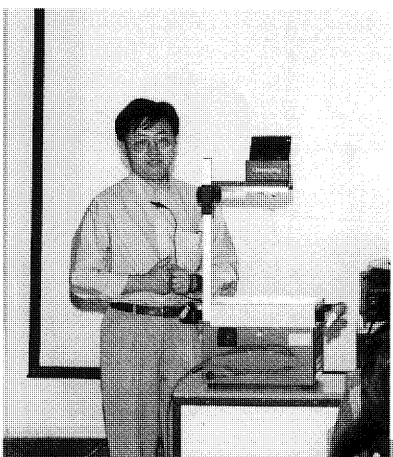
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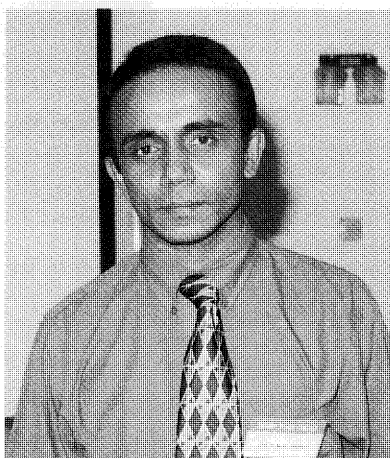
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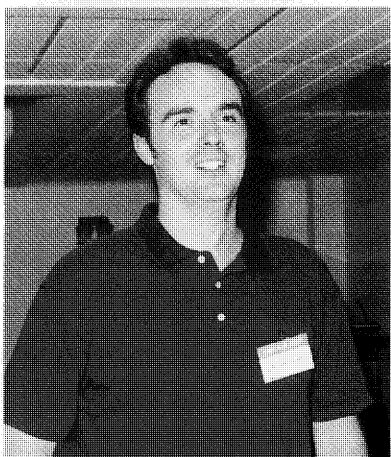
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Mr. Indrajith Aponsu



Mr. Solomon Buckman



Ms. Venus Wai Sum Chan

End-of-Millennium Lecture Speakers



Sir Andrew Burns



Prof. Amy Gutmann



Prof. Vincent Leung

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